

Table with exchange rates for various currencies including the Dollar, Pound, and others.

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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48,727

Michael Crichton: reading the future
Mystic Mike

Harold Pinter...

Society

Rush-hour terror in Paris



Rescue personnel evacuate the injured after yesterday evening's bombing of a rush-hour train in central Paris

Angry EU isolates Britain

Treaty reveals new conflict

John Palmer in Brussels

NEW draft European Union Treaty to be sent to John Major and other EU leaders tomorrow in advance of next week's Dublin summit, reveals the extent to which the British government has already lost the political battle over the future shape and evolution of the EU.



opt-out to the treaty. At present Britain has negotiated concessions from social rights legislation and other...

The timing of the Dublin summit, not long before the election, will make it almost impossible to prevent bruising exchanges between Mr Major and the other leaders. The Dutch government, which takes over the EU presidency from Ireland at the end of December...

Bombers bring death and chaos

Troops on alert in French cities

A man living above the station told French radio: "I saw the carriage and it was totally blown apart." Another carriage was also damaged. An anti-terrorist investigation squad was on the scene.



orders of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group. If Algerian extremists were responsible for last night's blast, they could have been protesting against a presidential referendum held by the Algerian government at the weekend. They may have been trying to increase the political impact by timing the attack to coincide with the arrival in Paris of the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, for a meeting with President Jacques Chirac.

Star Wars scientists find water in crater on the Moon

Tim Radford on an American discovery expected to trigger a new explosion of interest in Earth's nearest neighbour

UNITED STATES Star Wars scientists yesterday announced that they had found water on the Moon. They identified ice in a deep crater near the lunar south pole, where the sun's rays could never melt it.

The find is bound to trigger a new explosion of interest in the Moon, last visited by Apollo 17, more than 25 years ago. With water already there, humans could live and work on the Moon. Without it, they could not.

to launch all that stuff from big rockets on the Earth." After the Apollo astronauts had landed on the Moon, Apollo spacecraft project revealed "a formation the size of a small lake" in a giant crater.

minerals and water at the Moon's poles. In the meantime, the Pentagon's Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation had put up a radar-price space probe called Clementine, designed to test missile-tracking systems for Ronald Reagan's notorious Star Wars programme.

Inside
The fiancée of the man shot dead in a road rage attack, appealed for the attacker's friends to go to the police.

Britain
Burmese authorities blamed agitators for an all-night protest which led to police intervention and hundreds of students being detained.

World News
A secret plan to damage ERM, the jobsite for financial services group, has collapsed just days before it was to have been finalised.

Finance
Sport
Tim Henman, a male tennis star, earned £150,000 on his tour. Germany's Michael Schumacher, 31, is the first round of the Grand Slam cup.

Comment and Letters to
Obituaries to
Crossword 16, Weather 16, Radio and TV 16

Poverty is when you can't afford 50p. Imagine what life is like for many children living in the poorest parts of the world. Never to have eaten a decent meal, never to have drunk clean water and never to have had proper medical care.

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Sketch

Trick answer to a straight question



Simon Hoggart

TRICK questions come thick and fast in Parliament; what we had yesterday was a trick answer.

Tony Blair started with his usual mild first question. This is supposed to establish what a reasonable fellow he is, how he is asking only in a spirit of genuine inquiry, and to provide the excuse for his next two questions turning into a mad, frothing rant.

(The idea is that the rant appears on the Six O'Clock News. The problem for Mr Blair is that it doesn't quite work: his Mr Hyde looks even less frightening than his Doctor Jekyll.)

The Labour leader asked: "Will you now say clearly, and without qualification, that your statement of April 3 on behalf of the Government, that at the next election you will not rule out the option of joining a single currency in the next Parliament, remains unequivocally the position of the Government?"

(I had to go for a cup of tea after typing that. Imagine what it was like saying it.)

John Major rose. We were expecting his usual response, which is to ignore the question, to answer an entirely different question, or to claim that the question is guilty of gross moral turpitude in even wishing to ask the question.

Instead he replied, echoing Mr Blair's very words (what is the opposite of "very" words? Is it "somewhat" words? Mr Blair's "lightly" words?): "That remains unequivocally the position of the Government."

There was a sharp intake of breath from around the House. Nobody could remember when the Prime Minister last gave a straightforward reply to a straightforward question. Over to Bill Frindall in the commentary box.

"Thank you, Simon. I think the last record of the Prime Minister giving a straight-

forward answer to a straightforward question was Pitt the Younger in 1806, though he was on his deathbed, so that didn't count as a first-class match. Meanwhile, can I say how much I am enjoying this delicious fruit cake kindly sent in by Mrs Ema Fabricant of Rotterdam?"

Mr Blair wasn't nonplussed, but he didn't look exactly plussed either. He tried again, and got another straightforward answer. It was awful, and if it continues, could mean the end of Prime Minister's Question Time as we know it.

Later, a pair of young women in the Strangers' Gallery unfurled a banner, about arms sales to Indonesia, and started shouting. They were removed, roughly, by four attendants. Usually the House likes to pretend that these events are not happening, like gentry avoiding lager louts.

But this time a benchload of Nationalists, Scottish and Welsh, began applauding the protesters. Tories were enraged, and one of the clapping MPs, Cynog Dafis (PC, Ceredigion) was told to leave by the Speaker (though it turned out she was warning, rather than ejecting, him).

I can see the point. If demonstrations were allowed, the Commons could never contract any business. They have to be banned, just as you couldn't tolerate a loud protest against the cold weather allowance during a performance of La Boheme.

But I don't think I was alone in feeling a shiver of pleasure that for once, quite illegally, a gust of reality had blown for a few seconds through the fetid air of the Commons chamber.

Ken Clarke later reported back on the Ecofin meeting. For the third time in eight days, nobody laid a glove on him.

His message was that there were no real problems, everything was as predicted, it would be, and he couldn't understand why he had been dragged away from the pub to answer such pointless questions.

I could have come back saying that I had found and slain some dragons, but there weren't any dragons," he said.

Cobblers, but as the old joke has it, frightfully well-brewed cobblers.

Cabinet Europhiles unite behind keeping options open □ Sceptics fight on against single currency

Major backs Clarke on EMU

Michael White Political Editor

TORY Euro-sceptics last night vowed to fight on in their campaign against the single European currency after John Major decisively aligned himself with the Cabinet's Europhile heavyweights, Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine, in keeping British options open.

To rub in his victory, the Chancellor, who had been portrayed as isolated in Cabinet — by 18 votes to four, according to the Tory tabloids — gave MPs a report of deliberately mind-numbing complexity on Monday's meeting of EU finance ministers.

Sceptics had predicted he would commit the management of the British economy to disciplinary procedures under the planned "stability pact", whether the UK enters the single currency or not. But they failed to land a blow on Mr Clarke, whose willingness to resign if pushed too far is widely believed — not least by Number 10.

The Chancellor even denied slaying Euro-dragons in Brussels this week. "There weren't any dragons," he insisted. But the fight goes on to the promised two-day Commons debate before the EU's Dublin summit on December 13-14. A single mistake could

trigger a no-confidence vote. After days of renewed speculation that the Prime Minister may be edging towards openly saying "no" to British membership of the planned euro throughout the 1997-2002 parliament, Mr Major nattered the rumours under pressure from Tony Blair at question time in the Commons.

The Labour leader had asked him: "Will you now say clearly and without any qualification that your statement of April 3 on behalf of the Government, that at the next election you will not rule out the option of joining a single currency in the next parliament, remains unequivocally the position of the Government?"

Mr Major replied: "That remains unequivocally the position of the Government" — an unusually crisp and unambiguous answer. Mr Blair then urged him to "tidy up one small loose end" by endorsing remarks by Mr Heseltine on Radio 4's The World at One that "we are not going to change our position in the election campaign or in this parliament."

A tetchy Mr Major, who had been denying any subtle policy shift for two days, replied: "Mr Heseltine said that. That is our position." Tory loyalists cheered, but Mr Blair was satisfied that he had helped paint Mr Major into a corner where the sceptics will harry him all winter.

Though officials denied it, the exercise looked to have been co-ordinated at the Cabinet's morning strategy committee, which was chaired by Mr Heseltine.

Sceptics such as Norman Lamont, David Heathcoat-Amory and John Redwood peppered Mr Clarke with technical questions yesterday, convinced that most voters would respect the Cabinet more if it said what it — and they — believe: that Britain will not join a single currency before 2002.

The Clarke-Major-Heseltine axis is now certain to hold until polling day, since Mr Heseltine and Downing Street officials went out of their way yesterday to dismiss claims

that when Mr Major said there would be no policy change "in this parliament" he left open the option to make a switch during the election campaign — after Parliament is dissolved.

"How many times does one have to go on saying it?" Mr Heseltine told Radio 4. Britain would stay in the single currency negotiations to protect the national interest "until the ink is dry on the paper", he said.

One sceptic privately countered: "The Cabinet are always teetering on the brink of changing the policy. This will go on." The Europhile Tory MP Quentin Davies derided such talk. "They will just have to dream on," he said.

Row as tunnel trains resume service

Wesley Chaudhary and Rebecca Smithers

EUROTUNNEL was last night accused of putting profits before safety in the run-up to Christmas after it announced that passenger services through the Channel tunnel were to resume today.

The decision, 15 days after a fire broke out in the tunnel, was taken after a meeting of the tunnel's safety authority yesterday. A spokesman for the authority said it had advised the overall tunnel body, the Anglo-French Intergovernmental Commission, that services should resume.

The first train was due to leave Waterloo station in London for Paris at 6.50am today.

Ken Cameron, general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, accused Eurotunnel, the company that manages the Channel tunnel, and Eurostar, which operates the train services, of putting "profit before safety" to cash in on the expected Christmas rush.

He said: "We are of the opinion that the tunnel should not be opened while the repair work is being carried on. That is putting the safety of passengers and members of the rescue services at risk."

Roger Gale, Conservative MP for North Thanet, who has regularly expressed doubts about tunnel safety, said last night that he had "considerable lingering anxieties" about the resumption of passenger services.

Eddie Ryder, British chief of the tunnel's safety authority, said last night he was satisfied that the necessary safety equipment was available and that revised operating and emergency procedures were in place. He added: "The important thing to remember is that there is a safe haven [the service tunnel] within very close reach at all times."

Repair work on the part of the tunnel damaged by fire, which is expected to last between three to four months, is to continue while passenger services are running.

Eurostar plans to resume running 13 out of its normal 14 return trips to Paris and seven of its normal eight round trips to Brussels, but freight shuttle services are not expected to resume for some time.

A spokesman for Eurotunnel said: "We are absolutely delighted. This is an early Christmas present for us and our customers."



Gwyn Jones... An independent assessment panel has declined to reappoint him as chairman of BBC Wales and a governor of S4C and the BBC

Nolan reforms oust quango man

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

WELSH Tory once tipped as a future chairman of the BBC has become the first victim of Lord Nolan's clampdown on "jobs for the boys".

An independent panel has refused to re-appoint him as chairman of BBC Wales and a governor of both the Welsh language channel, S4C, and the BBC for the next five years.

Dr Gwyn Jones, aged 48, a flamboyant businessman, was given prominent quango posts by successive Welsh secretaries Peter Walker and David Hunt. His present part-time job at the BBC is worth £21,000 for a two-day week — a £18,000 salary plus £3,000 in benefits. His part-time post as a governor at S4C is worth up to another £13,000.

Now William Hague, the present Welsh Secretary, has used his discretionary powers to set up an independent assessment panel to interview candidates for re-appointment as governors for the

Track record

□ Criticised by MPs over spending £7,000 on Concorde and a helicopter to interview a candidate for the WDA's North American investment office. He explained he had heavy commitments.

□ He appointed as WDA marketing director a convicted fraudster, Neil Smith, who forged a reference purported to be from Home Office minister Sir Peter Lloyd while in prison.

□ Had to repay £3,379 of a £16,895 industrial grant when he converted part of one of his three homes into a flat.

□ Attacked by Labour MPs in 1994 for failing to declare an interest while, as a BBC national governor, he criticised BBC journalists over an investigation into a land deal it was between Tesco, of which he was a director, and the WDA, of which he was past chairman.

□ The Commons Public Accounts Committee said the land deal had been "handled in a totally unacceptable manner."

The decision to drop Dr Jones follows a period of controversy when he was appointed by Lord Walker as chairman of the Welsh Development Agency at a salary of £42,000 for a two day week. The agency has a budget of over £151 million to attract industry to Wales.

No sooner had he been appointed in 1988 when a series of scandals broke about the running of the agency, leading to a damning report from the all-party Commons Public Accounts Committee in 1993. Mr Hunt appointed him in

1991 to the BBC and S4C posts. In 1993 Labour MPs protested to John Redwood, Mr Hunt's successor as Welsh Secretary, asking him to remove Dr Jones from his posts at the BBC and S4C in the wake of the Public Accounts Committee report. Mr Redwood refused.

The BBC confirmed in London yesterday that Dr Jones is not to be re-appointed to the governorships. He is understood to have informed BBC Wales that he is not to stay as he has now been appointed a European chief executive for a global computer company. The announcement follows his rejection by the independent assessment panel.

Roderic Morgan, the shadow Welsh minister, who had campaigned for Dr Jones to leave his quango jobs, last night welcomed the panel's decision.

"Lord Nolan is to be congratulated in providing the opportunity to end this jobs for the boys system."

Labour rejects peer's threat on Lords reform, page 5

Review

Frayed farce that fails to catch fire

Michael Billington

Plunder Savoy Theatre

LAST time Griff Rhys Jones was due to appear in a Ben Travers farce at the Savoy, the theatre burned down. This time, he himself is the brightest spark in a revival that takes time so to speak, to catch fire: the fault lies more in Travers' frayed play than in Peter James' perfectly decent production.

Plunder, dating from 1928, has its place in history as probably the first farce to hinge on robbery and death and to threaten its twin heroes with the rope. It takes Travers a long time, however, to crank up the machinery. The plot-heavy first act shows society crook Freddy Malone enlisting his dimwitted chum, D'Arcy Tuck, in a plan to relieve an ex-housekeeper of some jewels she has gained by marrying her late employer.

It may seem absurd to apply contemporary political correctness to a twenties farce but two things stick in one's craw. The party in question, Mrs Hewlett, is seen as a just victim because she is extremely stout and lower class.

I know there was always a stereotype battleaxe in the Aldwych farces, but the joke in this case wears thin: the moral seems to be that you can get away with theft, and even an accidental killing, as long as you are well-bred old school chums and your victims are a predatory servant and her blackmailing brother.

Time, in short, has not been kind to the play. That it survives at all is largely due to the genuine charm of Rhys Jones who, as D'Arcy Tuck, gives the impression of a hapless innocent caught up in murky shenanigans. He is at his best in the largely silent scene of the bedroom robbery where he douses himself with the victim's chloroform and sways like a pine tree caught in a hurricane. He displays the well-timed fluster of the born farceur.

But Plunder, which nearly 20 years ago at the National seemed quite a jolly play, now begins to look as if it has passed its sell-by date. It contains a juicy star part and has some neat verbal byplay but it is based on class assumptions, not to mention cruel jokes about female fitness, that now look offensively dated.

This review appeared in some editions yesterday.

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صكنا من الامل



Ambulance crew wheel a wounded David Ewin away from the street in Barnes, south-west London, where police found him and a stolen car. He received gunshot wounds to the arm and stomach

Armed PC accused of murder

Suspect car thief shot as he made futile escape bid

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A POLICEMAN who shot an unarmed suspected car thief as he frantically tried to escape yesterday went before a jury accused of murder. Patrick Hodgson, a constable aged 48, said he shot the suspect twice because he feared for the safety of himself and the public. He denies the charge. David Ewin was shot from the front passenger side as he revved the car, making the wheels spin, the Old Bailey heard. Crown counsel John Bevan said that after the shooting Hodgson kept repeating: "Why didn't he do as he was told? I had no choice... It tends to suggest that Ewin

was shot because he didn't do as he was told. That is not the law."

Hodgson, who the map-ponder in an armed response vehicle patrolling west London on February 28 last year. Another officer in the car, PC Patrick Kelly, had jotted down the number of a stolen Toyota after a message on the police radio. By chance, they spotted the car parked outside a shop in Barnes, south-west London.

As they approached the car, a man ran out of the shop. "A normal midday Tuesday busy street scene was suddenly transformed," Mr Bevan said. Within minutes, Ewin, aged 38, lay wounded in the arm and stomach. He died in hospital on March 16.

Mr Bevan said Ewin saw the police car from the shop. Ewin said "Oh, no!" and ran out to the car.



David Ewin: was behaving 'like a maniac'

Witnesses gave confusing accounts of what happened, Mr Bevan said, but it was established that PC Kelly took a passenger, Charles Macrae, out of the stolen car and had him under arrest.

PC Kelly was surprised to see Hodgson draw his 9mm Glock handgun as he did not think the situation merited an armed response.

Hodgson grabbed Ewin by the shirt through the open driver's window but Ewin shunted the car backwards and forwards. Hodgson was

in danger of being crushed between the Toyota and the police car, the court heard. He tried to smash the windscreen with the butt of his gun.

A van driver positioned his vehicle to block Ewin's escape and Hodgson went round to the passenger's side of the car, the court heard.

He shouted "armed police" but Ewin was behaving "like a maniac", revving the engine and making the wheels spin. Hodgson fired two shots either through the open passenger door or window, the court said. "You bastard, you've shot me in the stomach," and collapsed.

As other police arrived, Hodgson told them: "He's been shot. I had no choice. I had no choice." He asked about Ewin's condition.

Later, he made a statement in which he claimed that he feared for his life and had to make a split-second decision. "He did not seem to have any regard for anyone else. I feared for my own life and members of the public," he said of Ewin.

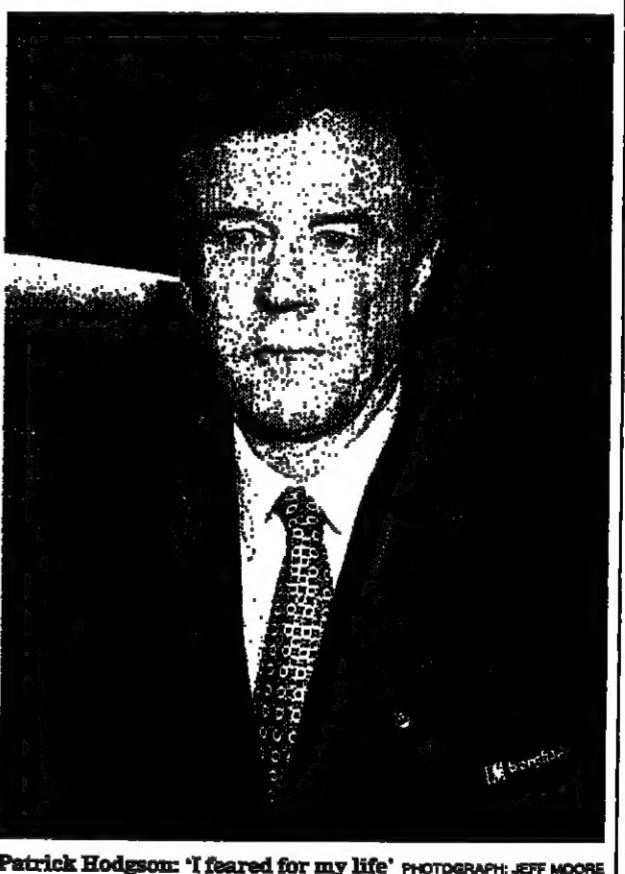
Mr Bevan told the court that Hodgson had many choices apart from shooting. At the time he opened fire, he was no longer in danger. Ewin was boxed in, his hands were on the wheel and he was

unarmed. The only danger was to the bodywork of the vehicles boxing the car in. Hodgson should not have drawn his gun in the first place, the court was told. The sight of the gun may have contributed to the panicky reaction of Ewin, who was found to have heroin, cocaine and cannabis in his blood. He had also consumed 1 1/2 times the legal limit of alcohol.

Peter Core, a bus passenger who witnessed the incident, told the court that Hodgson was lucky to have escaped injury by being trapped between vehicles. "I was completely and utterly shocked," Mr Core said. "I'd never seen anything like it... He fired twice in less than half a second - crack, crack." Hodgson had then dragged the driver on to the road.

Russell Johnson, a teacher who was cycling past, said: "When the car stopped there was an awful silence. Nothing happened for a couple of seconds. The policeman approached the car and shot the driver."

The court heard that armed response officers were highly trained and there were strict rules governing the circumstances in which they could use firearms. The case continues.



Patrick Hodgson: 'I feared for my life' PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF MOORE

Water firm cuts half its staff

Seumas Milne
Labour Editor

SOUTHERN Water, a privatised utility, will announce this morning it is jettisoning half its workforce - 2,000 out of 3,900 people - in a cost-cutting drive prompted by its takeover by Scottish Power this summer.

The scale of the upheaval, which also involves selling most of the company's subsidiaries, is far greater than expected. Employees had been led to believe at the time of the takeover that severe job cuts could be avoided.

Labour's employment spokesman Ian McCartney described the scale of Southern's move as scandalous. It was yet another example of the way utility bosses produce boom in the boardroom and bust for the workforce, while the taxpayer picks up the bill. Assurances given to regulator, customers and workforces have proved to be worthless.

A spokesman for the firm confirmed last night that just over half the workforce is to go over the next two years, but added that it was hoped redundancies would be voluntary and many of those working for subsidiaries would be employed by the new owners.

Southern Water, which was bought by Scottish Power for £1.7 billion, increased profits this year by 15 per cent to £166 million and analysts expect Scottish Power's earnings to increase by up to 40 per cent. But today's job cutting is bound to be seen as a recognition that Scottish Power paid over the odds for the utility.

Three quarters of Southern's 20 "non-core" subsidiaries - which employ 1,000 people across a wide range of businesses from IT Southern, an information technology consultancy, to Topmark, a vehicle hire firm - are to be sold.

Around 700 jobs will be shed from the company's core business and another 300 are in areas which will be "un-sourced". A company spokesman said compulsory redundancies in the core business could not be ruled out.

Staff were briefed yesterday by Southern managers and talks will continue today with the trade unions. It is understood that the minimum redundancy payout will be £3,000. A Union official said it would seek guarantees of no compulsory redundancies, protection for those who remained and the maintenance of proper services.

Total boardroom remuneration at Scottish Power this year was £1.7 million, with the highest paid director - chief executive Ian Robinson - earning £385,000. A bonus scheme which will boost directors' salaries by up to 60 per cent.

Labour job cuts, page 11

'Pravda' swaps sides to lambast Birt

Andrew Culf
Media Correspondent

THE BBC's house newspaper, Ariel, referred to by staff as Pravda for its unwavering loyalty to director general John Birt's regime, underwent a dose of glasnost yesterday.

For one week editorial control was handed over to seven volunteers from rank-and-file employees. It was a brave move by the BBC's Orwellian-sounding Corporate Internal Communication department: last month a union survey revealed that more than 97 per cent of staff were unhappy with the way the BBC was being run.

Yesterday's edition of the newspaper devoted its cover to a specially commissioned John Birt triptych from the hard-hitting cartoonist Ralph Steadman in the style of his series of "paranoid" caricatures. Ariel's usual diet of recycled BBC press releases and internal announcements made way for pages of satire at the expense of Mr Birt and his restructuring. There was an explanatory note from acting editor Daniel Jones, who works for BBC Wales, in the form of a Birt-style "mission



Ralph Steadman's John Birt triptych commissioned for the cover of BBC staff's 'Ariel Ultra'

statement". He said the seven members of staff selected by Ariel's full-time editor, Robin Reynolds, had one thing in common: "Few of us read Ariel, few felt it was particularly relevant, and it was anything other than a management organ."

They claimed the newspaper should be "trustworthy, informative, entertaining, educative, participating, provocative and robust". None of these adjectives is routinely applied to Ariel.

Mr Jones added, in a masterly impression of Birt-speak: "Ariel should be a powerful disseminator of

information, top down and bottom up it should reflect all aspects of an increasingly diversified BBC."

The team - which said it had been deliberately provocative - commissioned an article from Feedback presenter Christopher Rankley, who criticised senior BBC staff for "pussy-foot accountability" and a lack of confidence.

The newspaper, renamed Ariel Ultra, contained attacks on bureaucracy and barbs at the expense of executives Alan Yentob, Michael Jackson and Mark Thompson.

A BBC spokeswoman denied that the exercise had

backfired. The corporation might repeat it if feedback was favourable. She said: "It reflects the BBC's commitment to openness. It has given Ariel a fresh perspective and turned out very well."

Mr Birt's view on how well the exercise had turned out was not immediately available.

One of the editorial team said: "It has caused a real stir, although lots of people have come up and said it is fantastic."

"We tried to reflect honest and robust opinion as opposed to bland press releases. None of us has received a P45 - yet."

Passengers in transit this week will have been thrilled to find a new hardcover Michael Crichton title on the shelves. They will soon discover, though, that the former traveller's friend has produced the worst of all texts with which to settle down on a 747.

G2 cover story

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Turn in the killer, begs road rage girlfriend

Plea to driver in 'cat and mouse' chase that led to fatal stabbing

Sarah Boseley

THE FLANCEE of the man knifed to death on Sunday in a road rage attack, yesterday appealed for the attacker's friends to go to the police.

At an emotional press conference where Tracey Andrews was comforted by the parents of her fiancé, Lee Harvey, she called the attack "the most stupid, vile thing that could come out of just a car chase".

She told how Mr Harvey, aged 25, had participated in a game of cat and mouse with the battered, F-registered Ford Sierra that pursued their car, headlights flashing. The couple had overtaken the Sierra on the A38 in Bromsgrove near Birmingham, on their way home from a quiet evening in the pub with friends on Sunday.

"We were just followed and chased along the lanes. It was the case of both Lee and the other person playing cat-and-mouse with each other for a while, and then they overtook us. Lee decided to pull in and got out of the car," said the 27-year-old barmaid.

"There was some sort of argument going on, just stupid like just calling each other names and a lot of swearing going on."

The Sierra driver, who had exchanged insults with Mr Harvey, got back into his car. Then the front seat passenger got out and stabbed Mr Harvey in the neck, face and body more than 15 times, leaving him to die in the arms of his girlfriend, whom he had also cut and punched to the ground.

Ms Andrews, who had stitches above her eyebrow and two black eyes from the attack, said: "The driver walked off. It was nothing to do with the driver. I want to say: Will the driver of the car come forward, because you are not to blame for this, and I know that because you walked away."

"But you obviously knew him. He has ruined my life and he has ruined the life of Lee's parents. It was not your fault. Please come forward. And if anybody else can remember seeing us, please

just come forward. Any little thing could help."

Ms Andrews said that when she saw her fiancé slump to the ground, she did not realise he had been stabbed. "I saw the man hit Lee. I got out of the car, because I am not the sort of person to sit there. I came round the back of the car and Lee was on the floor."

"I thought he had been hit and then I went over to the man. We had a confrontation and he hit me. When I got up he was walking back to the car. Lee was lying on the floor. I didn't realise how bad it was because it was so dark. I just went into shock. I didn't know what to do."

She thought Mr Harvey had been speeding through the country lanes, with the other car on his tail, at about 60mph — "but it's really fast down a country lane."

"I was shouting at Lee to slow down and to ignore him and stop the car. I don't know if a lot of men are like him but when you get behind the wheel of a car sometimes you change personality. He doesn't like anybody telling him how to drive anyway."

"I cannot really say what caused them to follow us. The first I was aware of was when they were coming up close and flashing their lights at us. And then Lee was slowing down and then going fast as well."

Detective Superintendent Ian Johnston of West Mercia police, in charge of the murder investigation, said that in view of the attack on Mr Harvey, Ms Andrews was lucky not to have been more seriously hurt. The weapon was a sharp-bladed instrument, possibly a knife, but had not so far been found.

The couple, who each have a young daughter by a previous partner, had lived together in Alvechurch, near Bromsgrove, for two years. They were to marry next June. Ms Andrews described her fiancé as "a lovely, kind, generous, funny man".

The man who killed him, she said, "didn't seem normal. I can't say he seemed drunk, but he seemed to me he wasn't normal — as if he had taken something. It was just the way he looked. He had starey eyes."

Maureen Harvey, Lee's



Lee Harvey, stabbed in face and body more than 15 times

"I was shouting at Lee to slow down and to ignore him and stop the car. I don't know if a lot of men are like him but when you get behind the wheel of a car sometimes you change personality. He doesn't like anybody telling him how to drive anyway. I cannot really say what caused them to follow us."

mother, said a £10,000 reward for information had been offered by David Sullivan, the owner of Birmingham City Football Club, which her son used to support.

She said: "I am absolutely devastated... I think we have got to start thinking about the law and stopping handguns and knives and people using weapons. I believe something has got to be done."

Her husband, Raymond, said: "We are the most honest, caring and at this mo-



Tracey Andrews, with injuries from the attack, at yesterday's press conference

PHOTOGRAPH: IAN HOBBSON

Virgin unveils nuptial delights

Clare Longrigg

VIRGIN yesterday launched a one-stop wedding shop in Charing Cross, London, with an appearance from Richard Branson in drag as the bride of the future.

Mr Branson, in fuchsia lipstick, wore a cut-away shot silk bustle which revealed his legs in white fishnets, and a veil with Minnie Mouse bow. He had shaved off his beard for the occasion.

The idea for a wedding department store, selling everything from the frock to the cake decorations, came from a former air stewardess, Ailsa Fatchey, after she organised a wedding for a friend. "I found it completely exhausting. It was a nightmare," said Ms Fatchey, now general manager of Virgin Bride. "The excitement has gone from the bridal industry."

Virgin's interest is also likely to have been kindled by the honeymoon business. The store will have the first interactive booking system, with a face-to-face video link with travel reps. Virgin will take priority over other airlines when couples are booking a honeymoon.

The store, Virgin Bride, hopes to attract couples who want an unconventional occasion. Highlight of a catwalk show yesterday, which featured some of the shop's vast range of wedding dresses, was a ballgown in black PVC.

The store has massage and beauty facilities as well as a catwalk and hair and make-up stylists. Unwitting visitors yesterday found themselves face down on massage chairs being treated to a shiatsu massage.

Ms Fatchey added: "The bride wants to feel special; she wants to be pampered. Thirty-eight per cent of the market are second marriages. A lot of the brides are older, professional women who want an informal, funky wedding and haven't got time to organise it themselves."

Mr Branson said he was looking forward to some very public wedding stunts. "You never know, the first Virgin Bride wedding could take place in a hot-air balloon at dawn."

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سكنا من الامل

Right still hopes to change stance on euro before election, no matter how many times Major rules out shift

Sceptics turn screw on PM

Michael White
Political Editor

SURVEYING the wreckage of another day in the Commons wasted by Tory infighting over Europe the Labour MP, Roger Stott, last night cheerfully concluded: "There's definitely a familiar whiff of gangrene about it."

And he should know. As unpaid bag-carrier to the prime minister in the closing months of Jim Callaghan's minority Labour government in 1978-79, the Labour MP for Wigan saw at close hand his party's determined rush to defeat at the hands of Margaret

Thatcher. Demoralised and divided, living from day to day, and usually keener to fight each other than the resurgent Opposition, the Labour backbenches behaved as the Tories are increasingly behaving.

John Major's reiteration of the Government's "wait and see" line on British membership of the EU single currency yesterday should have ended the Eurosceptical drive to push him into a firm No.

But it won't any more that the last reiteration at the Tory conference in October. Or the one before that when Mr Major conceded the referendum in April. "We'll be back because the issue won't go away," sceptics said last night.

In 1978-9 Callaghan, like Major today, faced a pincer movement.

The left was already planning for Opposition, internal party reforms that would open the leadership to Tony Benn who stayed in cabinet — like Mr Major's "bastards" — while signalling dissent through friends. Today John Redwood runs his own guerrilla campaign, unrestrained.

MPs are not certain who planted the "Major Plans to Hold Out against Euro" lead story in Monday's Daily Telegraph. It followed "Ministers in Protest Over Mawhinney" on Friday's front page.

Though fanned by the Eurosceptic Tory tabloids, both drew emphatic denials. "The

Booker Prize for fiction," Mr Major said yesterday.

But they did not come out of thin air.

Many MPs assume that Monday's report, claiming that 18 out of 22 cabinet members support a hardening of the single currency policy against UK membership throughout the next 1997-2002 parliament, must have come from someone important in Tory HQ or Downing Street.

"Dr Angry" — Conservative Party chairman Brian Mawhinney — is a prime suspect as is Norman Blackwell, the McKinsey management guru who heads Mr Major's policy unit.

Both are thought to believe the Tories would become

more electable if their EU stance was firmer. There is only one snag: Mr Clarke, whose prospects in the party currently look as dim as Sir Nicholas Scott's, would unquestionably resign rather than abandon a compromise so sensible that Gordon Brown backs it too.

Everyone denies blame for the latest speculation. But the sceptics believe it is true and that a No to the euro is the key to general election victory next spring.

Now that Mr Clarke has delivered the cautious Budget he wanted — against their slash-and-burn advice — it is the only panacea they have.

"It may look like a death wish to you and me, but they don't

think so," one loyal ex-cabinet minister stressed last night. The awkward fact is that, after 17 years in power and still facing intractable problems, the Tory right has got religion in an ideological sense familiar to the old Benite left: conviction politics, Mrs Thatcher called them.

Mr Major is a tactician, not a born leader, and his Commons majority will disappear next month, as Jim Callaghan's did much earlier.

Will he go to the country earlier than May 1, as some MPs suspect to end his misery? Why should he, if he is still 20 points behind Labour after a Euro-winter of discontent to match Callaghan's winter of strikes?

Lords leader fights Labour reform plans

Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

LABOUR will brush aside a threat by Tory peers to block its plans for reform of the Lords.

Lord Cranborne, the Conservative Leader of the Lords, will give the most explicit warning yet of his party's determination to fight Labour's proposal to abolish the voting rights of hereditary peers.

In a speech and pamphlet, he will dismiss Labour's plan as "crass and ignorant" and offer only minor concessions.

A Labour source said a Labour government would offer Lord Cranborne an ultimatum: he could accept a compromise to turn some hereditary peers into life peers or expect all-out attack on the Lords.

"If their position is that they will fight to the death for the hereditary peers, they will die in the ditch," he said.

In his speech, Lord Cranborne is expected to suggest tinkering with reform by tightening up conventions governing the behaviour of the Lords, such as what bills they could delay. But the response of Labour last night was to reject this as amounting to nothing substantially new.

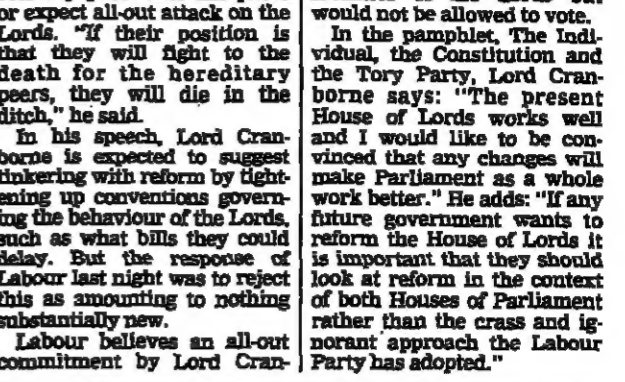
Labour believes an all-out commitment by Lord Cran-

borne to back hereditary peers would be intellectually and electorally indefensible.

Labour is committed to introducing a devolution bill for Scotland and Wales in its first year in government but has not decided on the timetable for Lords reform. Some argue that it should go hand-in-hand with the devolution bill because peers will attempt to block the plans for a Scottish parliament, others that two constitutional bills in a year would be unmanageable.

Labour's compromise offer to Lord Cranborne would allow the Conservatives to switch 50 of their hereditary peers to life peerages, which would give them voting rights. All hereditary peers would be allowed to use the facilities of the Lords but would not be allowed to vote.

In the pamphlet, The Individual, the Constitution and the Death for the hereditary peers, Lord Cranborne says: "The present House of Lords works well and I would like to be convinced that any changes will make Parliament as a whole work better." He adds: "If any future government wants to reform the House of Lords it is important that they should look at reform in the context of both Houses of Parliament rather than the crass and ignorant approach the Labour Party has adopted."



Kensington and Chelsea's chairman, Andrew Dalton, far left, and, clockwise from left, three MPs who may seek selection, Sir John Wheeler, Hartley Booth and Michael Stephen

MPs left homeless after shake-up set to join contest for Scott's seat

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

THE rush to replace Sir Nicholas Scott in one of the safest Conservative seats in the country will begin next week, when the 130-strong executive council of the Kensington and Chelsea constituency association will meet to discuss the timetable.

The plan is to have a new parliamentary candidate for the plum seat in place by the end of January. Former minister Sir Nicholas will remain as an MP until the election.

Heading the list of applicants is the Tory leader of Kensington and Chelsea council, Joan Hanham, who narrowly missed out when the seat was redrawn under boundary changes last year, and was retained by a whis-

ker by Sir Nicholas before he was unceremoniously dumped by the party on Monday night.

The high-profile left-winger could face challenges from other councillors such as Daniel Moylan.

The seat, a stone's throw from Westminster, will also be highly attractive to the handful of MPs and even ministers who are still on the look-out for a vacant seat, just

months from the election. Northern Ireland minister Sir John Wheeler, MP for neighbouring North Westminster, is expected to throw his hat into the ring, as could fellow MPs Hartley Booth (Finchley) and Michael Stephen (Sharnham).

The two London MPs have lost out under the redrawing of the capital's constituencies. Mr Stephen was unsuccessful in applying for a neighbour-

ing seat in Sussex. Also interested is the Eurosceptic Martin Howe QC, nephew of Sir Geoffrey, who would be an attractive candidate to those who thought Sir Nicholas "soft on Europe". Sir Nicholas himself has talked of at least a dozen highly ambitious locally-based young men — dubbed the "Tory beddit brigade" — queuing up to take his place.

Party members voted by 509

to 489 at the highly-charged meeting to oust the former minister, after he was dogged by a series of drink-related scandals.

Yesterday constituency chairman Andrew Dalton stressed that the selection procedure would be a "healing process" for the association, riven by tensions since the new seat was formed from the merger of Kensington and Chelsea.

Depleted Tories defeated on opt-out schools expansion

John Carvel
Education Editor

THE Government yesterday lost a key vote on its Education Bill when two Conservatives MP's went missing from the committee stage in the Commons, allowing Labour to defeat proposals for grant-maintained schools to expand by 50 per cent without asking official permission.

Although ministers will try to restore the clause when it returns to the floor of the Commons early next year, their fragile parliamentary majority puts the outcome in doubt.

Expansion of the grant-maintained schools was a central objective of the bill and one of three points most strongly resisted by Labour, local authorities and teaching unions.

The Government won a series of minor votes on the standing committee yesterday with its regular majority of 98.

But John Marshall, Conservative MP for Hendon South, got permission to leave just after midday to attend a charity event elsewhere in the Commons with Norma Major, the Prime Minister's wife. Anthony Coombs, the Government's committee whip, realised a Labour ambush was in prospect and went to look for him.

Peter Kilfoyle, the Labour education spokesman, abandoned a prepared speech to accelerate the key vote.

The Department for Education and Employment said ministers would try to restore the GM expansion power when the bill returns to the Commons in January or February. But Mr Kilfoyle said the Government would by then have lost its overall majority after the Barnsley East by-election. The defeat might also encourage further dissent in the Lords.

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Junta blames biggest demonstration in years on 'political infiltrators' as hundreds are questioned

Burma halts student march

Nicholas Cumming-Bruce in Bangkok

BURMESE authorities are blaming political agitators for a noisy all-night protest march by university students which police dispersed at dawn yesterday, briefly detaining several hundred protesters.

But in the early hours of the morning, a crowd of at least 2,000 marched through the centre of the capital, singing the national anthem, shouting slogans critical of the ruling military junta and waving banners calling for freedom and human rights. Heavily armed police halted the march at dawn, taking them to a disused race course for questioning. A senior military official said the authorities had treated the students "leniently and gently" and that most were sent back to their campuses after checks to confirm whether they were "real

students or infiltrators". Rumours that baton-wielding police had beaten up some demonstrators could not be confirmed. But the demonstration was more overtly political than a smaller student outburst in October, making it uncertain whether the protesters were using campus grievances to stir up political agitation. The marchers made no mention of the opposition National League for Democracy or its leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. But the security forces acted to prevent the protest from widening by blocking access to her house yesterday. "They have a strategy for

fighting the NLD, but this adds a new element," one analyst in Rangoon said. Ms Suu Kyi appealed yesterday for international support for the NLD, saying she had not been allowed to leave her home since Monday. Speaking by telephone to the former Commonwealth secretary-general Sir Shridath Ramphal in Cape Town, she said: "I would like the world to know that the repression in Burma is getting worse." She added: "Members of our party are subjected to very, very severe persecution all the time. People are evicted from their homes. People have been threatened with loss of jobs, and our

electd members of parliament are forced to resign." The size and boldness of the student protest appear to have surprised the Rangoon authorities, who need no reminder that student protest ignited democracy demonstrations in 1988. "The tension is based on a situation which is unresolved," one diplomat said, referring to student grievances. "You can't discount the possibility of things flaring up again." The deputy head of military intelligence, Colonel Kyaw Win, said yesterday that the students were incited by political elements linked to the democracy movement

who oppose the country's admission to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean). "They just can't believe that the students did it, the demonstration was too well organised and too well timed," a diplomat in Rangoon responded. The protest came only days after Asean leaders agreed at an informal summit to admit simultaneously Burma, Cambodia and Laos, probably in 1997, settling a long controversy about Burma's human rights record and economic unpreparedness. Critics of the junta fear its success in winning admission will strengthen resistance to calls for democracy.



Burmese students demonstrate in front of Rangoon University in the capital on Monday afternoon, before police quelled their protest at dawn yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: JUN KAMALIPA

Japanese foster future gameboys

Jonathan Watts in Tokyo

THE international success of Japan's computer-game industry has produced a host of new colleges exclusively for aspiring game software developers. "Ten years ago teenagers wanted to grow up to be pop stars. Now more and more of them aim at becoming video game creators," said Shuji Miyake, chief administrative officer at Human Creative School, which was the first specialist computer-game design school in the world. The school was established in Kichijoji, Tokyo, by the software company Human in 1990. A basic two-year course costs about

1.1 million yen (£13,700), and gives students the chance to develop their own games under expert supervision. Most go on to join software houses, or establish their own, supplying industry giants such as Nintendo, Sega, Sony and Matsushita. Despite the emergence of more than 50 rival game colleges, the intake to 450 places is now said to be over the Internet next year, for which it has already had more than 4,000 enquiries. Part of the appeal is the chance to join in Japan's first mainstream success in the international entertainment industry. Since Falco launched Space Invaders in 1978, Japan has dominated the global games-machine market, which is now said to be worth \$8.93 billion a year. The short fat plumber Mario, of Super Mario fame, is modern Japan's most successful cultural export, having sold 115 mil-

La Quina's jailers toss away keys

Mexico's union boss is no angel, but nor are those who trumped up charges against him, writes Phil Gunson in Mexico City

THE slight, frail 75-year-old perched on a bed in the hospital wing of the Recusorio Oriente prison is but a shadow of the man who once controlled a billion-dollar trade union empire and made Mexican presidents tremble. But Joaquin Hernández Galicia, former head of the oil workers' union (STPRM), is still regarded by President Ernesto Zedillo's government as enough of a threat by to be kept behind bars for the foreseeable future. "This is despite 'La Quina', as he is known, having completed three-fifths of his 15-year sentence for homicide and illegal possession of weapons, and thus being eligible for early release. He is still behind bars, La Quina maintains, for the same reason he was put there in January 1989 by the then president Carlos Salinas de Gortari — who is now disgraced and in virtual exile in Ireland. "I was an obstacle to the way they wanted to run [the state oil corporation] Pemex," he says. It was, he claims, his opposition to the piecemeal privatisation of Mexican oil that earned him the hatred of Mr Salinas. La Quina was described by Alan Riding, a former New

York Times correspondent in Mexico, as "an independent cacique [political boss] who had begun to believe he was stronger than the system and had successfully blackmailed at least two administrations." Rivals in the STPRM tended to meet violent, unexplained deaths, while many oil union bosses — though not by most accounts, La Quina himself — led mafia lifestyles. But rather than arrest him

related incident three states away was used as evidence for a murder trial. Still in jail, serving 30-year sentences for a murder they did not commit, are La Quina's gardener, two bodyguards and three others who happened to be at the house seeking work. Unlike La Quina, all were brutally tortured. According to Amnesty International, which considers the trade union leader a prisoner of conscience, the torture was carried out by senior government officials in the presence of the then attorney general. To Morris Tidball, Amnesty researcher on Mexico, the subsequent history of Pemex shows why La Quina had to be removed. "More than 100,000 [oil workers] lost their jobs," Mr Tidball says, "and several sectors of Pemex were privatised. These were all things he opposed. If he is released today he would still be an obstacle to some of the plans that have been announced in the last year." La Quina says he will not return to the fray. His doctors say he is suffering from a dozen chronic ailments, though the government dismisses them as non-life-threatening. The interior ministry claims he cannot be



Joaquin Hernández Galicia: ill but still behind bars

released since he is not "socially re-adapted", adding that it "cannot take into account arguments of a political nature". So, with his empire reduced to a white-tiled cell lit by 138, La Quina can do little but reflect on past glories, watch television and hope his jailers bow to the growing pressure for his release. "The sacking of Mexico's attorney-general took on political overtones yesterday as the two main opposition parties criticised Antonio Lozano Graeda's replacement. Felipe Calderón, head of the centrist-right National Action Party to which Mr Lozano belonged, objected that the new appointee, Jorge Madrazo Cuellar, had worked under the discredited President Salinas.

More people own and play computer games in Japan than anywhere else in the world

2.6 million yen (£13,700), and gives students the chance to develop their own games under expert supervision. Most go on to join software houses, or establish their own, supplying industry giants such as Nintendo, Sega, Sony and Matsushita. Despite the emergence of more than 50 rival game colleges, the intake to 450 places is now said to be over the Internet next year, for which it has already had more than 4,000 enquiries. Part of the appeal is the chance to join in Japan's first mainstream success in the international entertainment industry. Since Falco launched Space Invaders in 1978, Japan has dominated the global games-machine market, which is now said to be worth \$8.93 billion a year. The short fat plumber Mario, of Super Mario fame, is modern Japan's most successful cultural export, having sold 115 mil-

\$24.5m car crash award will bring calls to limit powers of juries

Ian Katz in New York

ANWAR SOLIMAN, the millionaire chief executive of a restaurant chain, hardly fits the stereotype of one whose life has been ruined by an egregious act of corporate negligence. Yet a Texas jury awarded him and another passenger \$24.5 million (£15.5 million) last week for the injuries they suffered in a road accident. Of this, \$10 million was in punitive damages. The case is certain to prompt fresh calls for reform a legal system which allows juries hearing civil law actions to award unlimited damages. The collision between three cars on the approach road to Dallas/Fort Worth Airport in December 1992 appeared to be the result of bad driving: the first vehicle stopped suddenly, the second swerved to avoid it, and the driver of the third was not watching the road. But Mr Soliman, aged 88, who was hurt in the pile-up, blamed several large flight information signs which had distracted two of the three drivers. The Texas jury agreed and ordering American Airlines, the company which erected and operated the signs, to pay \$24.5 million. Lawyers for Mr Soliman and a business associate, Ralph Roberts, argued that American Airlines had been repeatedly warned that the roadside signs could be dan-

gerous, but had insisted on erecting them. Though Mr Soliman suffered from blurred vision and a reduced sense of smell and taste as a result of the brain and spinal injuries he received in the accident, he did not lose a week's pay and is now back at work. During the six-week trial, however, friends and relations said that he had been depressed ever since the crash and frequently forgot appointments. Mr Soliman told the jury that he could no longer taste the food at his restaurants and his employment prospects had been severely damaged. "I'm not paralysed, I can still walk," he said. "But I'm not the same person who left that airport." The airline, which says it

will appeal against the judgment, argued that the accident was caused by negligent driving. But Mr Soliman's lawyers produced documents showing that airport authorities were concerned that the signs could cause accidents. The driver of Mr Soliman's car, like the driver of the first vehicle, was looking at one of the signs when the crash took place. Mr Soliman, who is married to a former American Airlines stewardess, said he would probably not have sued if the airline had simply agreed to move the signs. "Unfortunately the law only gives you monetary compensation," he told the Wall Street Journal. "Hopefully this is the language they understand."



News in brief

Russia's miners strike over pay

SIBERIAN miners whose mass protests helped bring Boris Yeltsin to power went on strike again yesterday — this time in an action which threatens to bring down his government. An estimated 400,000 miners throughout Russia downed tools for what they said would be an open-ended strike. They are angry at not being paid for many months. "We're worthless slaves — at least slaves get fed," said Oleg Kuznetsov, aged 34, a miner in the Kuzbass region who has not been paid since April. Other workers are angry too: teachers closed several schools on Monday and electricity workers in the region plan a protest tomorrow. Interfax news agency said the prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, may fly to Kuzbass to tackle the crisis. Miners' union leaders said yesterday that 40 of the region's 76 pits stopped working or provided just enough coal to supply local power plants; the local administration said no more than nine mines had gone on strike. — *Reuters, Kemerovo.*

Spain's coup leader freed

THE civil guard colonel who led a coup attempt against Spain's fledgling democracy by storming the lower house of parliament in 1981 left prison on parole yesterday. Antonio Tejero Molina was released from a jail on the outskirts of Madrid after serving 15 years and 8 months of a 30-year sentence, a spokeswoman for his lawyer said. Parole is usually granted after three-quarters of a sentence is served, but Lieutenant-Colonel Tejero was released early after a military judge last month discounted five years for work he had done in jail. Lt-Col Tejero and a group of civil guards officers tried to restore military rule in Spain six years after the death of General Franco by holding MPs, including the then prime minister, Adolfo Suárez, hostage for nearly 24 hours. The coup crumbled the next day when King Juan Carlos ordered the officers to return to their barracks. — *AP, Madrid.*

Military chiefs discuss Aids

ABOUT 200 Latin American military officers met on Monday to discuss the prevention and treatment of Aids and the disease's impact on the armed forces. Colonel Carlos Alberto Gonçalves, co-ordinator of health issues for the Brazilian armed forces, said his country would begin distributing condoms and information about Aids to new recruits. Brazil has more HIV-positive soldiers than any other Latin American country: 1,886 in a force of about 190,000. Mexico, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Argentina and Uruguay have all sent representatives to the seminar, which ends today. — *AP, Brasilia.*

Brad tries for Miss Australia

THE Miss Australia contest has its first male finalist: Brad Rodgers, who won the Victoria state qualifying competition on Monday night. Mr Rodgers, aged 27, who will compete under the title Victorian Fundraiser, is the first man to win a place in the finals since the contest started in the early 1960s. He raised more than A\$100,000 (285,000) for the Spastic Society, which earns about A\$5.0 million a year from the contest for its cerebral palsy centres. A department store manager, he said he hoped that, by dispelling the contest's lingering reputation as a beauty pageant, his participation would encourage other men to enter. — *Reuters, Melbourne.*

Aphrodisiac gum seized

SAUDI ARABIA has seized banned chewing gum and drops which are claimed to improve male sexual performance, a Saudi newspaper reported yesterday. The stimulants, sold discreetly by pharmacies run by "weak souls" in the conservative Muslim kingdom, were apparently smuggled from Israel, the daily al-Eqtisadiah said. Last year Saudi Arabia executed four Turks for trying to smuggle aphrodisiac drugs into the country. — *Reuters, Dubai.*

91 killed in mine blast

AT LEAST 91 miners died in a gas explosion in a coal mine in Shanxi province, China, the latest in a series of disasters which have prompted national calls for better safety precautions. Rescue teams have recovered 91 bodies since the explosion a week ago, a provincial government spokesman, Ni Yuan, said yesterday. The search for more victims was continuing. Local hospital officials said it was not known how many were in the Donggou mine in the north-central town of Guojigou, near Datong, at the time of the blast. China's state-run national media did not report the disaster, and Shanxi's local newspaper reported it several days after it happened. — *AP, Beijing.*

Carey welcomed by Pope

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, was welcomed in Rome by the Pope yesterday at the start of what promises to be a highly sensitive visit — the first by an English Preimate since the Church of England decided to ordain women. In a brief exchange of formal greetings with the Pope, Dr Carey stressed the "absolute personal and moral responsibility" of the Anglican Communion to the full, visible unity of God's Church. "He reminded the Pope of his own statement, in an encyclical, that Christian unity 'stands as the very heart of Christ's mission'." Addressing the Anglican community in Rome last night, he also ventured into controversial territory by addressing the Aids issue — a delicate matter for the Vatican — and can be used to support contraception. — *John Hooper, Rome.*

Bishop saves church worker

AN OFFICE manager for a Roman Catholic diocese who admitted stealing more than \$1.2 million (\$900,000) of the Church's money avoided prison after her bishop pleaded for mercy. Vincenza Bologna, aged 53, who worked at the Brooklyn diocese's pension office for 32 years, spent the money on boats, cars, college tuition for her sons and holidays to resorts such as Las Vegas. A spokesman for the diocese, Frank DeRosa, said Bishop Thomas Daily had expressed the desire that Mrs Bologna should not be sentenced to time in prison. She was given five years' probation, and will pay back the church at least \$235,000. — *AP, New York.*

New governor for Gibraltar

A FORMER Foreign Office minister was named as the next governor of Gibraltar yesterday. Sir Richard Luce will take up the job in February, succeeding Sir Hugo White, the Foreign Office said. Britain and Spain are at diplomatic loggerheads over Gibraltar, Madrid claiming sovereignty of the rock, and Britain insisting it can be handed over only with the consent of the local population. Mr Luce was a junior Foreign Office minister between 1979 and 1985, and held other ministerial posts until 1990. He retired from parliament at the 1992 general election. — *Reuters, London.*

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Press review

Serbia

PRESIDENT Milosevic's handling of the press is a reminder of the independent media has in this last bastion of old-style socialism. The state's policy has been to gag, jam and vilify.

For the first 18 days of the demonstrations, the state-run press found other things to write about. The day after 100,000 protesters marched past the *Politika* daily — the biggest demonstration seen in Belgrade since 1991 — the paper carried stories about Yugoslavia's expected upturn and a perky piece on the advantages of Christian Orthodox cuisine.

On Sunday night, the media silence came to an abrupt end when a television commentary warned that the opposition was bent on terrorism and would turn Belgrade into a new Beirut. It repeatedly showed stone-throwing demonstrators.

All yesterday's state-run press carried editorials reflecting the party line. *Politika* said: "These are not medieval times and the law of the lynch mob is fortunately not applicable. Those who threw stones at *Politika* will be brought to court for their vandalism."

The state's *Vesprel Novosti* scolded in on the frequent appearance of children at the marches. One expert claimed: "This will have devastating effects on children's minds."

The opposition *Nezavisna Borba* carried an editorial attacking the government's vilification of the opposition as a loss of nerve in the face of egg-throwing citizens. "Serbia finally showed it has more eggs than truncheons," it concluded.

The authorities have concentrated censorship on the new joint venture tabloid *Blic* and independent radio. Last week *Blic* was told by its state-owned printers that its print run would be slashed. A shareholders' representative wrote a scolding editorial saying the paper had no wish "to damage Yugoslavia's image abroad", prompting many of *Blic*'s editorial staff to walk out and start their own paper.

Mid-way through the protest movement, Belgrade's only independent radio station, *B92* found its news broadcasts jammed. *B92* traced the jamming to a former communist party headquarters.

It sent its bulletins out on the Internet where it reported on Sunday that the jamming effort had been so successful the police are no longer able to talk to each other on their radios.

Yesterday morning the jamming stopped. Instead, the Serbian authorities shut down the station, and the students' *Radio Index*, both went off the air at 5pm.

Julian Borger



Boy rides past burning barricade on the main motorway linking Athens with northern Greece PHOTOGRAPH BY YANNIS BEVRAKOS

Greece's bitter harvest

ΕΝΕΥΘΕΡΩΤΗΤΙΑ

Mihalis Kourmoussis in Athens

THOUSANDS of Greek farmers have continued their protests against fuel prices and economic conditions, blocking many of the country's main motorways and effectively cutting it in half.

Yesterday, farmers erected more barricades on national road and rail links, causing chaos for a sixth day and brushing off warnings that they were inflicting heavy damage on the economy. Queues of trapped international and domestic lorries grew at more than 25 blockades.

The government is desperate to find a way to open the roads before the start of the year. The government is desperate to find a way to open the roads before the start of the year. The government is desperate to find a way to open the roads before the start of the year.

Julian Borger

and the battle against inflation.

Athens has tried to avoid discussing the two main issues which sparked the dispute — fuel prices and the rescheduling of about 200 million in debts with state banks — because of the high cost of caving in.

Realising this, the farmers have sought more achievable targets such as increases in the support prices for cotton, wheat and milk. If they secure these demands, they intend to press on with the fuel and debt issues. This seems to have led to a stalemate.

On Monday, the farmers plan to expand their blockade to cover more of the country and will be joined by workers in other sectors such as cattle farmers, citrus and other fruit growers.

The unrest is not just a typical trade union demand for more money but is rather a forerunner of serious troubles ahead. The agricultural sector is at the end of its tether

following recent European Union and international agreements. There is a growing trade deficit in agriculture because of the importation of products in which Greece has been traditionally self-sufficient, such as maize, wheat, sugar, wine, fruit and pulses.

EU subsidies are being cut, while programmes to diversify crops have been abandoned. Promises of earlier retirement for farmers have also been forgotten while the livestock sector is being decimated by debts and health scares.

In this situation farmers are seeking to cut their costs by demanding exemption from having to pay the special consumption tax on petrol, a 50 per cent reduction in their electricity tariffs, and the placing of all agricultural supplies in a special VAT bracket. They also want an increase of 150,000 tonnes in the EU milk quota for Greece.

As the dispute continues

the position of the farmers appears to be hardening and they are considering blockading large towns and cities. The action has until now been centred around Larisa in central Greece, but now appears to be spreading as far north as Thessaloniki and Serres and south into the Peloponnese.

Nerves fray in the Elysée

Germany's weary carping over monetary union is pushing France to the end of its tether, argues Fredy Gsteiger

DEUTSCHE ZEITUNG

FRANCE is a self-assured and confident nation. She does not need Germany telling her what to do. Yet this is precisely how Bonn is behaving. Paris can do what it likes — but the government across the Rhine always knows better: it must do this, and abandon that.

With striking regularity, Frankfurt's monetary guardians and Bonn's politicians are drawing attention to France's shortcomings, making thinly veiled threats: if you cannot fulfil this and that criteria then, we are sorry to say, Germany cannot accept you as a partner in economic and monetary union (EMU).

Small wonder Germany has become a thorn in France's flesh. Week in, week out, the French are being lectured by Theo Walgal, the finance minister, that "3 per cent" and that strict limitations should be imposed on the budget deficit. Should the Bundesbank president, Hans Tietmeyer, be allowed to crack the monetary whip relentlessly while unashamedly promoting Germany's budgetary and political ends?

French politicians in favour of EMU are increasingly outraged at the torrent of complaints and self-righteous advice coming from Germany. One minister has even described the situation as "extremely delicate", another talks of "a highly critical moment" and advisers in the Elysée are feeling "irritated, and a certain degree of bitterness".

This time there is no clash of personalities. On the contrary, Jacques Chirac and Helmut Kohl seem to get on well. No, it is much more serious: the whole substance of Franco-German relations is at stake. At precisely the time when the financial markets are predicting that investment in the euro currency will begin on deadline, Bonn and Frankfurt appear to be distancing themselves from it.

Paris perceives Germany as spreading its wings. The entry of Italy, Spain or Portugal becomes more likely. The Germans are forever creating

new hurdles and imposing higher conditions which are almost impossible to fulfil.

Paris feels snubbed. President Chirac can scarcely make a suggestion without being reproached by Germany. If Valéry Giscard d'Estaing publicly voices his thoughts on a devaluation of the euro over the dollar, this is seized on with horror: now they want to water down the Maastricht criteria. And while German budgetary flexibility is regarded as "creative accounting", the French are castigated for fiddling the books.

Bonn politicians are saying one thing and are under pressure to do another. On the one hand, they have preached to the voters that the deutschmark will have to be sacrificed in the interests of European unity; on the other, they have committed themselves to ensuring that the euro becomes at least as strong as the mark.

Today Germany herself would be unable to fulfil the sacred Maastricht criteria. Yet the politicians in Bonn cannot deviate from their promises without causing unrest at home.

The mark has become the state religion, but should France have to pay for this obsession? Must it accept all the blame, simply because the German government has talked itself into a corner? Above all, must all Europeans now have their economic policies dictated by Germany?

Distinctly lacking on the part of Germany is a fundamental appreciation of the radical changes which France is undergoing. Because Germany is not sufficiently interested in its neighbours, it is overlooking and underestimating their enormous

strengths in terms of monetary discipline and budgeting over the last 14 years.

For five years France has maintained lower inflation than Germany, and the franc has been stable for much longer than the mark. Until recently, it would have been inconceivable for the National Bank to be independent. Subsidies have been cancelled, enterprises privatised, employment programmes cut back. The French Republic can hardly be accused of laxity.

Furthermore, a real cultural revolution is taking place. The French have been expected to break with many traditions and dispense with various safety nets almost overnight. From a highly centralised state, France is transforming itself into a decentralised, liberal market economy. The French are unfamiliar with political, let alone economic liberalism. Liberalisation and globalisation, deregulation and privatisation: for France, these are dirty words.

The French have a different history and a different relationship with the state. Now, citizens are being asked to depend on it no longer. For the man on the street, this is difficult to accept. It is not surprising that resistance to the necessary austerity measures is stronger in France than elsewhere.

Some even delude themselves that they can ignore globalisation. Indeed one can find advocates of a quite different policy both within the Gaullists and on the left wing of the Socialists.

For Jacques Chirac and Alain Juppé it is not easy to steadfastly adhere to the prescribed course under such difficult circumstances. In spite of this, they are committed to it. But every critic from Bonn is received by the French as a knock sideways.

Admittedly, France has always been a sensitive country — but at the moment this sensitivity is justified. Germany is promoting its own self-interest too loudly, and praising the efforts of its most important partner too softly.

One can only emphatically urge Germans who are in favour of monetary union — given France's clearly frayed nerves — to refrain from pointing the finger like a chastisement. Theo Walgal and Hans Tietmeyer may well be correct in some matters. But do they have to insist on being superior all of the time?

Jonathan Steele on why the West sees Red when it looks at the leader of Belarus

The bear's cub stirs next door

THE STRANGE thing about the highly authoritarian constitution which the Belarus president, Alexander Lukashenko, has just had endorsed by referendum is its similarity to Boris Yeltsin's. Indeed, whole sections — particularly those which give the president enormous powers and reduce parliament to impotence — are taken verbatim from the Russian text.

The way it was adopted also bears the hallmarks of Russia's December 1993 referendum. Just like Yeltsin, Lukashenko allowed no opponents access to state television to campaign against the referendum. Out of 2,249 minutes of broadcasting devoted to the issue, not one reflected the parliament's point of view.

Allegations of fraud cropped up in both countries. In Russia the margin of victory was much narrower and a shift of a few percentage points could have meant the turnout was too low to ensure the Russian constitution's passage.

Why, then, has the West used Lukashenko's long-running struggle with parliament to turn him into a hate figure and make his country a pariah, denied the friendly advice of the International Monetary Fund and a seat in the Council of Europe? The reasons have little to do with Lukashenko's lack of democracy and much to do with the market economy and Western foreign policy imperatives.

The Belarus president is the only leader of post-Soviet eastern or central Europe with the temerity to resist privatisation. He re-nationalised most banks, has prevented shops being sold off to their managers, and insists that the state and collective farms (of which he was once a chairman) continue to supply them.

Although the economy suffers many of Russia's market traumas even Lukashenko's opponents concede that inequalities are less glaring, crime is lower, and the mafia less prevalent. Street-begging and homelessness are rare, and prices in the shops are between a half and a third of those in Russia.

Worse than that, Lukashenko wants to forge a union with Russia and maintain a military link. Although he has sent the last nuclear missiles back to Russia, the West treats him as a menace.

"You can't marry the Belarusian parliament to the Rus-



Lukashenko ... defiantly against market economics

sian presidency". Lukashenko told Russian TV viewers a few days before the referendum in a none-too-subtle bid to explain why he needed to follow Yeltsin's 1993 example. Even less diplomatically, he promised not to use tanks against his parliament.

Lukashenko is a combination of Russia's three strongmen. He has Yeltsin's vanity and tactical skills, Zhirinovskiy's sense of humour and lack of tact, and Zyuganov's Soviet nostalgia.

It is an odd combination which has split his opponents. The parliamentary leadership of the Communists and Agrarians teamed up with the pro-market liberals in denouncing the president's grab for power. The old Communists who led the party before 1991 are on Lukashenko's side, as are the elderly rank and file.

The new rich, and those who want to make money, are not sure where to turn. The younger ones are centred in the few independent businesses and the opposition media.

Others have clung to the presidential honey-pot, though not always for long. As in Russia, sleaze and unaccountable power occupy the space where democratic debate and the public interest ought to be. Like Yeltsin, Lukashenko has expanded the presidential bureaucracy into an apparatus larger than the old Central Committee. He runs the country via a host of non-budgetary funds.

"He has three bases of support," says Piotr Martsev, a thirty-something former Young Communist League official who edits a business paper. "There are the cronies to whom he has given the best properties in Minsk, tourist complexes and holiday homes; workers in the state sector who are on his payroll; and some businessmen who worked with him and got tax privileges and the rights to import goods without customs duties."

The handful of genuine democrats are left stranded. Stanislav Shushkevich, who headed the parliament until Lukashenko's takeover in 1994, still hopes that progressive politics will one day have a place in Belarus.

It seems quixotic. The saddest place in Minsk is the old execution ground at Kuryapaty where Stalin's police shot hundreds of thousands between 1939 and 1941. Unearthed in 1988, the forest glades could have been turned into a national monument. But in its two years of power the post-communist government failed even to put up a road sign so that school children and other visitors could come and learn to distance themselves from their country's authoritarian past. Instead, in twisted form it lives on around them.

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United again (for now)

The Tories close ranks: until the next Euro-split

ARE THE Conservatives completely mad? Not quite, but they seem to be getting that way. At the weekend, the Tory rumour mills suggested that the Prime Minister was about to make a fresh demarche on Europe...

sceptics don't believe a word of it. They are forever dreaming up fresh fantasies about the preparations for monetary union, forgetting that the Chancellor is absolutely right to insist, as again he has always done, that the third stage of EMU will have consequences for Britain whether we are in or out...

End of story? If only, from the Tories' point of view, that it were so. The reason why the party is aflame with these excitements is that Labour has called their bluff over the single currency referendum...

Yesterday, we published a poll which showed that, after a brief closing of the gap during the autumn, the Tories are once again 19 points behind Labour. The Tories' November recovery had followed a party conference in which they took a stance on Europe, agreed it, and stuck to it...

Preserving the best of the NHS

But Labour still needs to match Tory spending promises

LABOUR produced its latest health proposals yesterday - but wrapped them in two separate book covers. Which would you prefer? In the Daily Mirror, the shadow health secretary set out his strategy for restoring the NHS to the structure which was known and loved...

tation, increased bureaucracy, complete with gagging clauses that have turned a national health system into a national stealth service. There is a further problem for Labour: the last thing the NHS needs now is another major upheaval five years after the last. That is why Labour's evolutionary approach is welcome even if its feigned revolutionary rhetoric is regrettable...

How to reduce road rage

One solution is to give cars a bit more body language

ROAD RAGE - which claimed its latest tragic victim this week - is an affliction that is barely two years old. The police are right to point out that it doesn't officially exist and that violent crimes involving cars are covered by existing legislation. If the phrase road rage or its derivatives - like trolley rage at supermarkets or job-centre aggression at employment offices - is taken to imply diminished responsibility then that is wrong: violence is violence. Yet many people admit something happens to them when they strap themselves into a space they deem their own in cars when they are more likely to assume an aggression and possessiveness otherwise suppressed...

when required. But part of the problem is surely down to design faults. Cars are impersonal with misleading body language. When they hoot, it is seen as aggressive, even though the driver may have been trying to draw attention to a flat tyre. Why not have two pitches - a ding-dong for friendly messages and a normal hoot for warnings? Front lights are also ambiguous. One recent case of road rage (which ended in death) started because a driver thought he was being "flashed", even though the car following was merely going over an undulating road. In this electronic age why can't simple messages (like "sorry" or "please don't drive so close" be flashed on the surface of the car by pressing a button? Persuasive measures have done a lot to reduce drinking and driving. There's no reason why similar approach couldn't reduce road rage. Car drivers are, after all, human beings. Well, most of them.



Letters to the Editor

A little legal lesson

CONTRARY to David Hart (Don't sue the teacher, December 3), I say: do sue, but the LEA, not the teacher. Legal, not political, action is the way to ensure one's rights, as the Americans have rightly perceived. The 1944 Education Act laid out parents the key duty to cause every child to receive "efficient, full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude" (Section 39). There was a corresponding obligation, repeated in the 1980 Act (Section 192), on the LEA to secure a child's attendance at a school which fulfils this criterion of suitability.

UNDER Labour, school students will lose the right to sue if they fail examinations because of their teachers' negligence. David Blunkett says this is because any damages they would win would be better spent on bringing the school up to scratch (insurers pledge to resist lawsuits on exam results, December 3). If his argument has any validity in a school context, which I doubt, doesn't it have even more force in the context of medical negligence, where an exemption for hospitals could save millions of pounds?

rights. If I bought double glazing and it was poorly installed, I would take the contractors to court, if necessary, to gain compensation. It is exactly the same principle. (Rev) Brian O'Neill, 82 Hawthorn Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7EN.

Professor A H Halsey pointed out in your column on January 18, 1994 that the provision had never been properly implemented by LEAs and that their foot-dragging over Statements of Special Educational Need was provoking parents to sue them. The LEAs were more concerned with controlling their finances than with satisfying needs.

He dare not oppose the requirement for schools to provide more information, but he intends to ensure students can't put the information to use. (John Spencer, 38 Earlsfield Road, London SW18 3DN.)

DAVID HART does not mention student responsibility. Were they sufficiently instructed, or did they spend too much time watching TV and going out with their friends rather than doing their homework? (E T Shepherd, Oak Cottage, Stoke Close, Stoke D'Abernon, Cobham, Surrey KT11 8AE.)

WHY is everyone so shocked at the prospect of litigation by students from "failing schools"? The 1988 Education Reform Act and its long train of subsidiary acts is based upon the fundamental assumption that education is a commodity and therefore part of the market culture.

Parents and their parents are now consumers of education and, as all consumers, have

HOW long will it be before teachers start suing those parents who neglect their duty of care in bringing up their children? I refer to the parents of the badly behaved children who go on to disrupt the orderly learning environment which can lead to under-achievement by other children. (Brian P Moss, 83 Mill Crescent, Kingsbury, Tamworth, Staffs B78 2NW.)

The Bel tolls

FOR 30 years I have blamed Jack Straw for painting the slogan "Dick Knowles and John Anson: Enemies Of The Working Class" on the pavement outside 9 Queen Square, Leeds. When I was secretary of Leeds Labour Party and John Anson was the Yorkshire regional organiser, Jack has always denied it. It must have been Bel Littlejohn, though I am surprised that she could spell "Belmont" correctly.



So Bel Littlejohn has solved another mystery (November 29). The graffiti slogan on the wall of Leeds University, "Organise For Anarchy", bore the tag "BF" which I always thought was that of the then Labour candidate for Moor-town in the 1965 municipal election (Bernard Ingham). I now realise that the tag was "BL". My belated apologies to both comrades Jack and comrade Bernard. It was that militant feminist Bel all the time. (Clr) Sir Richard Knowles, Birmingham City Council, 64 Woodgate Lane, Birmingham B22 3QY.

NICK Sparrow, of pollsters NICM, omits some crucial factors in his discussion of the accuracy of opinion polls (Polls apart on the voting slips, December 2). First, neither of the polling methods he describes addresses the circumstances in the respondents' constituencies. Were I to be telephoned, I should give a confident "Liberal Democrat" response, but my local circumstances might lead me to vote Conservative (if I do so appeared to provide a greater chance of a balanced Parliament or Labour (for the same reason). Others might have different reasons for casting a tactical vote.

any check is made on whether the respondent is an elector (ie on the register). An estimated 4 per cent of those entitled to register have not done so. He also disregards the matter of postal voters and twice-registered people, from students to second-home owners. Finally, he fails to discuss the ultimate nonsense of our first-past-the-post lottery: that the winner of the most votes does not necessarily take the most seats because there is no necessary link between votes cast and seats won. A great deal more adjustment is needed. (Tony Ewins, 19 Stanley Drive, Hornby, Lancaster LA2 8NA.)

IF Eric Morley is right in saying that "intelligence is the main factor" in judging Miss World contestants (Letters, November 28), then can we look forward to the title being won next year by Germaine Greer, Iris Murdoch or Barbara Castle instead of a young and shapely supermodel? (Chris Willis, English Department, Birkbeck College, London WC1E 7HX.)

No bonus for the Lottery

PETER Davis, director-general of the National Lottery, felt able to challenge (Letters, December 2) the suggestion made in your columns that the Government had conducted no research into the impact of the National Lottery on individuals.

ENSURING that Lottery players have what he calls an "informed choice" has caused Peter Davis to prevent Camelot promoting the Lottery as a way of making contributions to worthy causes, using such happy slogans as "Fun for your funds for projects like these" and leading people perhaps to think a bigger slice of the Lottery is going to charitable causes than is actually the case. This is odd, because Mr Davis's office agreed an advertising code of practice with Camelot which, in theory, prevents Camelot suggesting that Lottery funds are a substitute for direct donations. (Paul Buttle, 18 Brewery Lane, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 6LJ.)

Lisa Jardine and the rape of our cultural heritage

LISA Jardine's ruling is certainly clear: banish "graphic representations of acts which violate, harm or humiliate anybody" (It may be art, but is it violence, December 2 Letters, November 3). Basements of museums around the world will be filled with a substantial fraction of European art, from Breughel to Bacon. Photo-journalism does not even have the excuse of being art, so those hastily-scanned scenes of the liberation of Belsen or of the screaming Vietnamese girl running down the road scorched with napalm ought never to have been published.

FOLLOWING Lisa Jardine's logic, should every picture of the crucifixion disappear from churches? Should public artistic commemoration of the Holocaust be censored? Should we in Wales remove memorials to our princes because they fought the English, thus doing them harm? What will be left? Portraits of aldermen and Dutch still-lives, perhaps. (Gerald Morgan, Rhiwlas, Cliff Terrace, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 2DN.)

CHRISTIANITY will probably point out that the purpose of a crucifix is not to encourage crucifixion, nor has it often had that effect: the Belsen photographs are understood by most people as a powerful plea that such events should never occur again, though of course they have not ensured that. Jardine's ruling completely ignores any distinction between what an image depicts and what it means.

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GO to see Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, Lisa, and you may work it out. (Lucy and Chloe Dallimore (14), 263 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 2RP.)

ANY election victory by ex-Champion Marsh will be very old hat indeed. Back in 1886, Bristol-born, British Empire war-knicker heavy-weights in Poplar and Canary Wharf last year. I was then chair of the CLP and I don't remember Terry saying anything at all.

Terry Marsh on the ropes

THE Terry Marsh of your article (in the yellow corner, December 2) is very different from the Terry Marsh I remember at Labour Party meetings in Poplar and Canary Wharf last year. I was then chair of the CLP and I don't remember Terry saying anything at all.

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WHY is Terry Marsh standing as Lib-Dem candidate for Basildon? It is a seat he cannot possibly win. By splitting the opposition vote he will make the chances of a Tory victory that much easier. (Bruce Kent, Gro-Chester, Gro-Chester, London N1 9JF.)

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A Country Diary

FORT TROLLHIEM: Pale, luminous daylight spreads from invisible dawns, trapped in nets of fog, floating through the rolling Devon countryside. A huge, black poplar looms from the misty banks of the River Otter. Its dark, knobby boughs rake a bright blue sky above. Slowly, the fogs draw back into water-meadows and the last smoky wreaths are sucked into the streams. Oaks and beeches hold their burnished gold in winter sunshine. Smoke curls from fires. Dogs bark, voices, drums and flutes peel out into the morning. Up the muddy track through pasture, Fort Trollhiem stands atop a little flinty hill on the edge of a plantation of tall, dark firs. Crossing the rickety ladder over the palisades is like crossing into another time. Inside this little hill-fort are tarps and covered dwellings, gardens and communal living areas. Fort Trollhiem, one of three camps near Ottery St Mary, is part of the longest-running road protest in Eng-

land. When built, the new A30 extension will smash through woods and copses, shear through rolling hills and be carried across the water-meadows on huge concrete pillars. It's hard to imagine a more devastating testimony to 20th century brutality in this landscape. Beneath Fort Trollhiem, in the path of this road, is a warren of tunnels and chambers where the protesters will lock themselves to concrete blocks to resist eviction by the bailiffs and delay the road-builders. The evictions could begin any day now. Life in the camps follows the natural rhythms of the day, until night falls and great, dark sweeps of rain wash over the woods and meadows. But under the mud and roots the burrowing trolls are ready. With a courage that seems so in tune with the beauty of the land they have vowed to protect, in their subterranean darkness they are prepared for the siege. (PAUL EVANS)

صوتنا من الامل

Diary
Matthew Norman

In what theatre critics will come to see as the most significant portrayal of a British politician since David Hare's *Kincock* in *The Absence of War*, Environment Secretary Little Gumm Gum is the central character in a new play. Those eager to see it must make their way at once to Hungary, where tonight, at the University of Budapest, *B For Beef: Buy British* will be staged. The part of Little Gumm Gum, known in it more respectfully by the name "Gum Gum", is taken by Gergely Biro, a student in the production, which is set in Szarvas, India and finally Brussels, India and Gumm's force-feeding of less than sane beef to his daughter that summons the god Krishna (the author, Rami Drew, is Hindu), who saves the child and then the distressed national herd, which he leads "out of the land of abuse and violation to their homeland in Brindaban in India". Plans to turn the play into a major film have been put on hold, apparently, due to the unavailability of Hollywood's first choice for Gumm Gum, the late Charles Hawtrey. Val Kilmer is standing by.

Bel Mooney, my old friend from the 60s, writes a Daily Mail "essay" reconciling her liberalism with the desire to censor films like *Crash*. However, in an otherwise splendid article, her sentence leaves the door open to misinterpretation when she writes that the tone of Gillian Freeman's 1967 treatise on pornography was "as terminally flippant as a typical Guardian column today". Bel would, I know, I know, but it is absolutely clear that she was in no way referring to the Diary.

An intriguing possibility surrounds the recent editorship of the *Times Educational Supplement*. Word has it that, although the favourite remains Peter Wilby, who edited the Independent on Sunday with such distinction, another fancied runner is now the Observer columnist Melanie Phillips. Since savaging the entire profession, which she described as being "in a slough of low expectations and underachievement", in her book *All Must Have Prizes*, Ms Phillips has become the country's leading hate figure for teachers, and her appointment would be the loose equivalent of putting the Dewhurst family in charge of Britain's vegans. The TES is oddly coy about the matter, the current deputy editor refusing to confirm the existence of a shortlist. It does exist, though, and Ms Phillips is on it.

A PRESS release arrives about a recent dinner at Claridge's to launch the first new cigar for a decade. Even though Lord Wyatt of Westford was of the party, it would be indefensibly rash to name the cigar until its importer, Hunters & Frankau, has sent a box of 25, or indeed 50, for sampling. This column's reputation for exhaustive research was not won without effort, and it will not be lightly jeopardised now.

My new friend Sir Tim Bell has vanished. Sir Tim, you will recall, promised on Monday lunchtime to come back swiftly with a response from Sir Anthony Lloyd Webber, after the Diary informed him that our sources confirm the story about the solitary voiding of the bladder during the interval of *Jesus Christ Superstar's* recent first night. We are not prepared, quite yet, to do red alert. However, in the light of precedent with Tory PR characters (I need remind no one of the kidnapping, and subsequent replacing by robotic clone, of Dr Julian Lewis), we are mightily concerned.

A YOUNG Scotsman arrested in Rotherham has added racism to his offences. Police magazine reports, after shouting "you English bastards" at the officer who charged him with being drunk and disorderly. The feelings of the officer, PC Stefano Giuseppe Gilardoni, are not recorded.

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Abortion debate is still a minefield

Commentary Catherine Bennett

FOR the first time in many years, anti-abortion obsessives are in good heart. Since the early summer, hardly a week has gone by without an opportunity for the champions of fetal pro-life to expatriate doctors or to threaten politicians, to reprimand unhappy women or, time permitting, to promote the religion which inspires their cause. Better still, the media have become willing to listen. Affecting stories of "innocent" fetuses and melted "ice babies" now attract the kind of tender, journalistic interest which was once reserved for trapped kittens and impaled donkeys. Last week, a 14-year-old whose feat was to refuse to accept an award from pro-choice Barbara Follett was introduced to readers as an exemplar, if hardly representative specimen of British girlhood.

Small wonder that Britain's friends of the embryo are jubilant. "Now we've got at

least three papers on our side," Phyllis Bowman, the director of SPUC excited recently, "and you've even got the Guardian running an article calling for IVF to be abolished." Capitalising on this apparent support for their cause, pro-embryo activists have devised a more ambitious scheme, the Pro-Life Alliance, which plans to field 50 parliamentary candidates at the next election. Its object is partly to force abortion into party politics, by obliging their target MPs to make statements on the issue, and also to earn themselves a party political broadcast, in order to disgust viewers with scenes of late-termination carnage.

Apart from making viewers squirm, it is hard, at first, to see what advantage the Pro-Life Alliance will reap from this scheme. Its own spokesmen concede that they will probably not win any seats; and as for sympathy, repeated surveys suggest that the majority of voters support women's right to abortion. Last summer, after lavish and emotive coverage of the deformed IVF embryos, the harassed (and aborted) twin, and the grotesque predicament of Mandy Allwood and her brood, a Mail on Sunday poll still found 81 per cent agreeing that it was important for a woman to have the right to choose whether to continue with her pregnancy.

Plainly, most people, though they may consider abortion a grave action, do not believe that it is infanticide. The hopes of the Pro-Life Alliance presumably rest on the fact that this widespread tolerance is rarely reflected in public life. In the House of Commons, for example, the 1967 (pro-choice) Act is supported by a majority of only 298 to 264. Similarly, many recent media reports have lingered on the flaming rhetoric of pro-lifers, whether they are churchmen, politicians or full-time activists; while the opposite, more commonplace point of view is represented only by the familiar rebuttals of the Birth Control Trust, or a few firm phrases from Sir David Steel. The result is that some of the most tasteless and bizarre statements by pro-life extremists go unchallenged.

Jack Scarisbrick, the chairman of Life, was respectfully reported when he insisted that Mandy Allwood must be kept "out of the hands of the killers" (her doctors), and allowed to carry all eight fetuses as a matter of pro-life principle. "People will see the row of children alongside her in bed and will say 'how lovely,'" he predicted. "I hope they will also remember the doom-and-gloom talks from the doctors." They have certainly forgotten Mr Scarisbrick's breezy assurances. It seems scarcely to have demed his credibility, that every single

baby died as a result of this life-enhancing strategy. One reason for this imbalance of coverage is, no doubt, that no one in their right mind could ever be "unmistakably pro-abortion" — a phrase much favoured by the pro-life movement. Abortion is by definition a failure, for all a sadness, and for some a disaster. So very few of the four out of 10 women who are estimated (by the Birth Control Trust) to have endured an abortion are likely to advertise the fact, or to throw themselves into public campaigning, or even to tell their friends and family. It's why few women write, personally, to object when they are accused of being murderers, or of being like Herod, or like Hitler's engineers, or like guards in a concentration camp.

In the absence of such protest, MPs who are pro-choice have a still greater duty to defend the interests of the

majority of voters from the agitation of dogmatic extremists. Instead, there is virtual silence. Last Saturday, Janet Anderson, who is apparently Labour's "spokeswoman on women's issues", declined to comment on the rise of abortion politics. Far more has been heard from the indefatigably anti-abortion MP Elizabeth Roscoe, who will today attempt to introduce a private member's bill to prohibit "partial-birth abortion" (a technique not used in this

country). Given that any pro-choice statement is likely to lead to tirades from Roman Catholic bishops, or the canonisation of 14-year-old schoolgirls, you can understand the reluctance to speak up for individual freedom. But if no one does, the debate will remain hysterical, polarised between two equally unrepresentative camps. How many, outside the Catholic Church, share Cardinal Wiseman's belief that the termination of a fetus of a few weeks is equivalent to the amputation of a five-year-old child at Dumblands Primary?

It is equally hard to believe that many women would now subscribe to this assertion from Jane Roe of the Abortion Law Reform Association: "As far as we are concerned it is irrelevant what the fetus looks like until it is capable of existence outside a womb." Contrary to pro-life propaganda, advances in foetal medicine and ultrasound scans have made it harder, not easier, for women to regard fetuses as lumps of indeterminate matter. There are those, for example, who believe abortion should be available on request up to 12 weeks, but after that only in exceptional circumstances. Beliefs about abortion are as varied, as private and as individual as all other spiritual convictions. Tony Blair was right when he appealed for abortion not to become a party political issue. In a secular state there is no reason for conflict between his own personal opposition to abortion and his pro-choice voting record.

It is, however, partly Blair's fault, if his occasional profanities of his status as a believer have now encouraged religious fanatics to think their convictions should be converted into law for everybody. Perhaps it's time Blair admitted that he's not his brother's keeper after all.

If you dance in the streets here, you die



David McKie

CECIL PARKINSON'S late-80s dream of fast-tracking the land with £20 billion-worth of new roads took a further post-Thatcher's pounding in last month's Budget — the fourth year in a row that this programme has been cut. "A hit-and-run Budget catastrophe," raged the RAC. Conservationists, though, like Friends of the Earth, were reported to be delighted. They weren't dancing in the streets in Collingbourne Ducis, however. Not that they'd dance in the street there at any time. If they did they'd be swiftly mown down by some monster juggernaut speeding dairy products to the Midlands. They could hardly even dance on the pavements, so close does the traffic pass. On the bend in the road by the church (which has recently had to find £18,000 to replace a wall wiped out by a heavy lorry) there's no pavement at all. The church lets schoolchildren take a cut through the churchyard. If it didn't, there would be funerals.

For 30 years, Collingbourne Ducis, on a stretch of road where the A338 and the A346 briefly combine, has wanted a bypass. For the past six years the Collingbourne Ducis Bypass Action Group has agitated for relief. Until recently it seemed to be making progress. Wiltshire County Council had organised an exemplary local consultation which led to some 80 per cent of the village backing a route to the west. Then this autumn came the news that the council had changed its mind. The relief of Collingbourne Ducis had been struck from the programme.

So the lorries keep coming. The Tibbet and Britten Group, Tesco, Iceland, Allied Distributors — rumbling and clanking past pretty thatched cottages reached by bridges across a stream. This, ironically, is a conservation area. To ensure that the place is kept as it was, you can hardly lop a tree — you certainly can't change your front door — without breaking the rules. But there's no such restraint on road hauliers. The village reckons that at peak more than 11,000 vehicles pass through in a 12-hour period, some 11 per cent of which are heavy lorries. The county council quotes more modest figures, but that's because they average the flow across quiet periods too: at night and on Sunday, the road is quieter. Yet even that is changing. Many more lorries

now travel in the early morning, partly because they service shopping precincts where access is only permitted before shopping hours. Morlands of Abingdon, Spillers Milling, Thames Valley Eggs, Iceland, again. As national supermarkets squeeze out local traders, as the search for cheap food eliminates the local supplier, so the procession through Collingbourne Ducis becomes more and more swollen by conveyers of food and drink. Quartermain's Transport, Robert Lee (London) Ltd, Woolworth's, "right up your street for value". Except, of course, that Woolworth's are up somebody else's street, not in bigger settlements who get the benefit, and villages like this which pay the price in disruption. It isn't only the noise and vibration: it's a sense of being in enemy occupation. The merciless lorries which stop you crossing the road are like an invading army. And it's going to get much, much worse. Traffic nationally is expected to double in 30 years. The increase will be even faster in counties like Hampshire and Wiltshire (Collingbourne is close to the border) which are destined to take the highest share of the 4.4 million new homes we are told we will need in the next 20 years. If it isn't given bypasses, this traffic will invent its own, as it's already doing across clogged-up Wiltshire, where even un-qualified Labour seem to find themselves thronged by lorries escaping from overloaded As and Es.

ADVANCED electronic gadgetry is promised to enable drivers stuck in jams to find making routes around congested roads and villages not yet afflicted will very soon share the fate of Collingbourne Ducis. And now we learn that the Government is ready to sanction the use of 44-tonne lorries, arguing that bigger lorries ought to mean fewer lorries. Yet in practice the use of bigger lorries is just as likely to mean a further shift of business from road to rail. If you go on pouring traffic on to a road system which cannot hope to cope with it, something will burst. It may be the tolerance of the victims. To passive resistance designed to stop motorways we may soon have to add passive resistance to stop the ruin of rural communities by alien traffic. Action having been turned by the boundary commission into a safe Labour seat, the transport secretary, Sir George Young, has found a new billet in Andover. Andover is a mere dozen miles from Collingbourne: about a third of Collingbourne's tyrannous traffic is coming from there or heading there. He's a decent, open-minded chap, and a friend of the Earth. They should ask him over.



The debate over Sir Denis Mahon's collection spurs Brian Micklethwait to demand an end to all government arts subsidy — in order to improve the product Art in the market-place

AS an opponent of all subsidies to the arts, I note with some glee that Sir Denis Mahon has cooked up a scheme to pressure future governments to be as keen on arts subsidies as he is himself. He has promised to give the nation paintings worth £25 million, provided that future governments look after them properly, without selling any and without further cutting arts funding. Whenever someone very rich demands something from the Government, you can rely on others to tell him: no.

Sir Denis also opposes museum entry charges, such as the British Museum is thinking of introducing soon. The general assumption here is that the arts, culture, and so on, should be run as a nationalised industry. Yet the case for these things being nationalised is as threadbare as the case for running shoe shops, agriculture, the car industry or rugby football on the same basis.

Nationalised industries are inherently unsatisfac-

tory. They bestow resources not upon those good at identifying and satisfying the ultimate users of and customers for the benefits in question, but rather upon those skilled merely at lobbying. In the case of the arts, subsidies divide high art from commercial art in a way that hurts both. High art becomes precious, obscure and excessively self-retentive. Commercial art, if it comes more "commercialised", in the worst,

state. Traditions — artistic and of other sorts — grow and thrive in the free society, fuelled by the resources and the enthusiasm of those partisans who are enthusiastic about them. It is only when traditions start to fade or ossify that people like Sir Denis Mahon demand that the tradition in question be preserved with state subsidies. If this demand succeeds, the rot really sets in, because the pressure to renew is switched off. For

art — in this case the art market — which is now doing most to concentrate minds on the skills of art preservation and presentation, not government subsidies. What this market would be like without government subsidies we can only guess, but I say, let's find out. It would surely survive and probably thrive, not least because new ways to contemplate art might be discovered if the business — yes, the business — of look-

earned state "help" — is currently renewing itself with money gained from the exploitation of the latest visual technology? The arts, meanwhile, just sit there and expect us either to go there in person, or to make do only with unwieldy or miniature printed reproductions. When will there be screens able to reproduce all that we expect to see in person? Instead of just one? The money from that would more than cover the cost of looking after Sir Denis Mahon's collection of baroque originals. But no, that would be too vulgar.

If it looked as if cultural institutions could be profitable, what sort of ghoulish people would end up running them? Better to keep the whole enterprise mixed in subsidies, and like Sir Denis Mahon, go to one's grave whingeing.

Brian Micklethwait is the editorial director of the Libertarian Alliance. He is the author of numerous pamphlets, including one titled *Against Arts Subsidies*.

When will there be screens able to reproduce all the paintings of the past instead of just one?

Guardian-reader-type sense: it becomes more crass, vulgar and stupid than would be the case if highbrow types also gave their attention, as producers, critics and consumers.

It simply is not the case that, just because something is an ornament to our nation's culture — "part of our national heritage" — it should be funded by the

preservation read taxidermy followed by publication. When it comes to preserving the treasures of the past for the delight of future generations, nothing is certain, and certainly not the promise from one Parliament to bind all its successors. What if future generations do not share Sir Denis's taste in pictures? What can be said is that it is the mar-

So farewell then, Nicholas Scott

Matthew Engel hails the fall of the Tory MP as a victory for democracy

THE news that Sir Nicholas Scott MP had been deselected by the Tories of Kensington and Chelsea was the lead story in four of Britain's national papers yesterday. It led the BBC's morning news bulletin. The most telling comment came on *Breakfast News*. It came as a complete shock. Jon Sopel said. No one at Westminster expected it. Everyone there assumed Sir Nicholas

would be all right. And there has been, throughout this, an undercurrent that what was happening was vaguely disgraceful, possibly undemocratic, certainly unBritish. He was a nice chap, a decent man, a cricketer even. If it could happen to him, MPs of every party seem to be thinking, it could happen to us.

Terrific, I say. Sir Nicholas was a Tory government minister for 13 years. He served "loyally" in Northern Ireland and in Social Security, where he had to push through legislation which his own daughter famously and publicly opposed, and in which he seemed to have trouble believing. He was rewarded with a Tory MP's knighthood, a badge of dishonour in itself. If at any point he ever contemplated resignation on a principle, it does not seem to have been reported. It is a career that sums up everything that is wrong with British politics. Of late, he has been in

two scrapes. He was not deselected the first time, when he ran away from a car crash leaving a child trapped in a wheelchair — "a minor indiscretion," according to one of his supporters. It was contemptible behaviour, worthy of Edward Kennedy. The second incident, when he was harmlessly drunk, was less serious in itself. But his explanation was quite incredible. He is worthy of our human sympathy. But why on earth should he remain an MP?

There may well be 100 MPs, in every party, far worse than this sad and gutless man. The Tories of Kensington and Chelsea have shown the way to their constituency parties too. A thousand people attended their meeting on Monday evening. They debated the issues. They may well have been influenced by local, petty jealousies and rightwing ideology of which we disapprove. But they established a principle that ought to act as a beacon everywhere.

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Koji Kobayashi

Playing to win in Japan

THE GREAT myth about Japan's industrial miracle is that it happened through harmonious consensus rather than individual effort.



Kobayashi recalled working three nights without sleep to beat a deadline, cooling the resulting fever by putting his feet in a bucket of cold water

backer of the Japanese Co-Prosperity Sphere, developing a telegraph for the Manchurian railway, the spearhead of Imperial Japan's ambitions in China.

climate he built a trapdoor behind his desk to escape from attackers.

forces with radio equipment. It then boldly carved out new markets, both geographical and technological.

than "plug compatible" copies of IBM.

David Herbert

A shelf full of quality

DAVID Herbert, who has died aged 69, was a remarkable publisher, in the old-fashioned but wily administrative sense.

Press which increasingly monopolised his attention, and that of his wife Brenda, who he had met at Penguin, and who helped him develop his own list of books.



Herbert... real flair

After a schoolmastering stint at Eton and at Christ's Hospital in 1950s, he went briefly to Aldus Books and then to Studio Vista.

Herbert... real flair

pleasure as the books sold. Usually the books were designed for a specialist audience, but Herbert seemed able to judge precisely how large that audience might be.

His partial deafness added to the feeling that he might have been happier choosing his books in the calmer period of publishing between the wars, a silver ear trumpet at the ready.

But this impression belied a keen commercial sense and a fierce competitiveness on behalf of his authors and their books.

There was no one in the least like him in publishing, and the many outstanding titles which benefited from his imagination, and both editorial and production flair will stand as his monument.

That is what he himself would have wished.

Irving Gordon

Simply unforgettable

IRVING Gordon, who has died aged 81, was one of the foot soldiers in the vast army of composers and lyricists which dominated the golden age of the American popular song.

There is one intriguing footnote to Gordon's career which has nothing to do with songwriting and may explain why so able a lyricist wrote comparatively little.

He is survived by two sons and a grandson. He was always renowned for his knack of dreaming up attractive titles, and at his death left behind a musical called *Dr Freud Will See You Now*.

Irving Gordon, songwriter, born February 14 1915; died December 1, 1996

daughter Natalie re-recorded the song as a duet with her posthumous partner.

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Irving Gordon, songwriter, born February 14 1915; died December 1, 1996



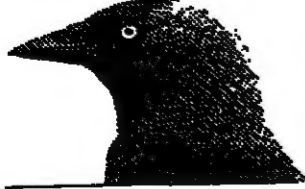
Songs of praise... Irving Gordon collects his Grammy award in 1992

Letter

Alan Knowles writes: In his obituary on Reginald Invis (November 19) John Biffen tells the story of how *Bevens* told the press, when asked what he as Postmaster-General thought about the BBC's new satire programme *That Was The Week That Was*.

leaving a studio after my northern news bulletin had been broadcast when I was greeted by the engineer in the control room, a gruff northern character, with the news that he'd just seen off a "nutter".

Jackdaw



Smart, no heart

FORGET good and evil; the really important thing is style. People and things simply have or don't have that elusive quality of stylishness, that certain something that makes them chic.

Sade, or having a nice sing-song with Cliff Richard backed by St Francis?

From the first moment when Cruella appears in that sleekest of cars, which I imagine as a sort of cross between Lady Dicker's famous *Sis* Daintier and the Batmobile.

Over a period, exposure to criticism and the hostility of television commentators must have a cumulative effect upon impressionable managers. Some become liable to question whether the manner in which daddy spends his leisure hours is civilised.

Ernie Leslie

Practical and pragmatic unionist

ERNE Leslie, who has died aged 76, was a prominent figure in the Scottish trades union movement for almost four decades.

high politics of a particularly turbulent union in which every official had to face the membership for election on a regular basis.

humour. He made a habit of recording the jokes and humour of the workplace in a little book, for subsequent application when the opportunity arose.

George Ernest Leslie, trade union official, born June 15, 1920; died November 27, 1996

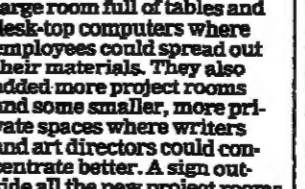
Birthdays

Farhad Afshar, neurosurgeon, 55; Barbara Amiel, columnist, 65; A L Rowan, historian, 83; Pamela Stephenson, actress, 46; The Rev Prof Cecil Weir, Hebrew and Semitic scholar, 99.

Deaths Notes

JOSIE DAME PENLOPE, peacefully at home on December 2, widow of Bobby, much loved mother of Graham and Andrew, died on December 2, at St James' Church, Gifford, Midlothian, aged 74.

Jackdaw



Smart, no heart

FORGET good and evil; the really important thing is style. People and things simply have or don't have that elusive quality of stylishness, that certain something that makes them chic.

decent or humane. I admire the work done by the Countryside Foundation to get sensible information about country life and field sports into schools, but it is a struggle.

My daughter stopped hunting for several years, but went out for the odd day last season and was surprised by how much she enjoyed herself.

Work stations

THE ad world, of course, has always been a place where wacky ideas are tested so no one paid much attention when founder Jay Chiat announced that his agency would go "virtual".

Goodbye again... Hello!

صكنا من الاله

political row

Secret

A

Lucas cuts to 3,000

E

Buyers to by mortgage

Weddog wants master of Teresator reports

M

Political row over Racal, page 12

Tomorrow: Some cheer for Bass

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Secret plan to split BAT fails

Paul Murphy
SECRET plan to split BAT Industries, the tobacco and financial services combine, in two has collapsed, the Guardian learned last night.

dramatic deal that would have transformed Britain's insurance sector. At the same time, with the demerger of the group's tobacco business, which controls almost 20 per cent of the American market, BAT would have been able to address concerns voiced by several of its major shareholders that the group was at risk from the threat of US smoking-related litigation.

Stock market sources indicated that the deal - which is believed to have encompassed a bid for a composite insurer such as Commercial Union - could well be resurrected in the future. BAT has clearly been preparing to hive off the Dunbar and Eagle Star businesses, together with its Threadneedle Asset Management fund management group, since before the summer, when it announced a reorganisation of the division. This involved grouping the three units under a new umbrella company, British and American Financial Services.

and Commercial Union might have created a financial powerhouse valued at \$15 billion or more. The plan, however, is thought to have run into trouble early last week, though the reason remains unclear. Last night, stockbrokers pointed to a burst of speculative activity in shares in Commercial Union a week ago, on Budget day. At the time of the financial services reorganisation, in July, BAT's option of acquiring a bank was ruled out. Sandy Leitch, head of the financial wing, said at the time: "We have looked at acquiring a bank a number of times before. But, at the present time, the prices are very high and we do not like the look of the inherited bricks and mortar we might buy."

Imperial Tobacco, the cigarette firm which has just been demerged from the Hanson Industrial conglomerate. Analysts saw a fit between BAT's mainly US tobacco business - with brands such as Pall Mall and Lucky Strike - with Imperial's portfolio of Embassy, Superkings and John Player Special. "Shareholders would love to see a demerger of BAT," one analyst said. "We have seen its famous US competitor, RJR Nabisco, have its own planned demerger blocked by potential smoking litigants. We can only speculate on what has blocked this."

Notebook

How to deflate inflation figures



Edited by Mark Milner

THE US government will today be offered a statistical "helping hand" towards its goal of abolishing the budget deficit by the year 2002, with the release of a Congressional report arguing that the consumer price index (CPI) overstates inflation by up to one percentage point. The argument rests on two pillars. First, the CPI fails to pick up changes in behaviour resulting from price changes. If chicken gets dearer, shoppers switch to pork - but the index keeps measuring chicken. This "substitution" effect means that the real cost of living rises more slowly than the CPI suggests.

pound's bull run continues. The only possible area of concern, certainly for domestic investors, is the risk of a rise in interest rates. But the attractions of the latest offering from the Bank are not based only on price. The issue will, for example, form the next five-year benchmark bond - a status which always provides additional cachet. It is also strappable - in other words it is one of the growing number of issues which (once the central gilt office is upgraded) can be divided up into its constituent elements; repayment of principle and individual payments of interest accruing during the life of the bond. (CPI overstates inflation by up to one percentage point.)

However, the latest issue does not in itself, provide direct evidence of the most important element of the gilt market reform - the development of the £15 billion a day gilt repo market. Its success will allow the Bank another big (and imminent) step in reform; the use of the repo market to manage monetary policy. That would bring it into line with continental European practice, helping to protect the City's position as a financial centre.

Home buying maze
WHEN does consumer choice change from benefit to burden? Somewhere in the middle of Britain's mortgage maze, according to Bill Davey, a senior official at the Office of Fair Trading.

LucasVarity cuts to cost 3,000 jobs

Chris Barrie Business Correspondent

ENGINEERING giant LucasVarity is to axe 3,000 jobs and sell 13 businesses employing another 5,000 people as part of a huge cost-cutting exercise. With half the jobs to go in the UK, the move is a dramatic escalation of the redundancies expected when the motor components and aerospace company Lucas Industries merged with diesel engine-maker Varity three months ago.

group's electronics and electrical businesses, almost certainly through acquisition. The businesses to be sold include four UK firms, Lucas Heavy Duty Products of Acton, west London, employs 500 people and makes parts for trucks and buses. Coventry-based Lucas Industrial Components makes car parts. Specialist metals company Lucas Nitrotec employs 40 people in Birmingham. And Lucas Assembly and Test Systems employs 300 people, also in Birmingham. Another five companies slated for sale have yet to be publicly identified. Mr Rice said the group was "reasonably down the line" on concluding deals. The disposals cover sales of £270 million, representing 6 per cent of the group. The revamp follows LucasVarity's decision to axe 10,000 jobs in the UK and 10,000 in the rest of the world. The group's chief executive, Victor Rice, said the move was a "thorough and total review".



A fireman takes a street shower yesterday after tacking a blaze at the Treasury in Whitehall. PHOTOGRAPH BY GUY LAWRENCE

Treasury raises £257m in sale of residual government stakes

Ian King

THE Treasury collected £257 million towards last week's Budget tax cuts yesterday, when it sold most of the Government's remaining stakes in privatised businesses such as British Energy, National Grid and Scottish Power. The sell-off means the Government has now almost completed its £1.5 billion "mop-up" privatisation programme announced last year, aimed at selling residual holdings in privatised companies ahead of the selection. It brings the total amount raised by the Government's privatisation of former nationalised industries to £55 billion. After yesterday's sale, the Government owns a 0.5 per cent stake in BT worth about

£242 million, and a small stake in British Energy, worth about \$7.5 million, which has been retained in order to cover bonus share entitlements. It also still has an estimated 14 per cent stake in the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, whose share price has been ravaged by the long-running industrial dispute with a number of dockers sacked last year. The main holding sold yesterday was a near 13 per cent stake in British Energy, whose initial privatisation in July flopped when the shares opened at 96p, against the 105p at which they had been sold to City institutions. However, the shares have recovered since then, enabling the Treasury to sell the stake yesterday at 147.5p a share to broker HSBC James Capel.

A spokesman for NM Rothschild, which organised a competitive auction for the stakes, explained: "We thought it represented a good time and a good price to sell all of them."

What was sold

Table listing various government stakes sold, including British Energy, Scottish Power, Scottish Hydro-Electricity, Scottish Water, National Grid, Northern Ireland Electricity, Wessex Water, National Power, PowerGen, South West Water, and TOTAL.

The second biggest stake sold was a 1.6 per cent holding in Scottish Power, worth about £5 million. The buyer was Kleinwort Benson, which also snapped up the Government's remaining stakes in National Grid, Northern Ireland Electricity, Scottish Hydro-Electricity, National Power and PowerGen. Other brokers involved in the sell-off included ABN Amro Hoare Govett, which bought a small stake in South West Water, and Merrill Lynch, which bought stakes in Severn Trent Water and Wessex Water. A notable omission on this occasion was SBC Warburg, which this time last year handled the biggest single element of the mop-up privatisation, the £513 million sale of the Government's remaining stake in BP.

Buyers 'baffled' by mortgages

Watchdog wants more protection. Teresa Hunter reports

MORTGAGES have become so complex they are in danger of confusing customers, building societies were warned by a consumer watchdog at a conference yesterday. An Office of Fair Trading consumer affairs spokesman, Bill Davey, said consumers needed better protection when choosing a loan as they were increasingly unable to pick their way through the mortgage offerings. He told delegates at a building societies conference in London that too bewildering a range of options could prove as anti-competitive as too restricted a choice. "Loans are now on offer at both variable rates and at interest rates discounted or fixed for a variety of periods. Lending is combined with life and building insurance, not to mention cash back or free surveys. "These are complex deals affecting consumers over many years. One must surely recognise the burden this places on consumers."

sonal financial services, according to Nationwide chief executive Brian Davis, who said a new Act was vital to allow societies to prosper. He called on the Government not to give way to the "blackmail" of societies converting to banks, which he believed would restrict their commercial activities after flotation. Building Societies Commissioner Geoffrey Fitchew said the Government had strong reasons for amending the five-year rule, which had protected building societies which become banks from takeover for the first five years. A new building societies Bill, to be published soon, removes this protection from converting societies, which take over another organisation. The Alliance & Leicester, which should come to the market next April, has threatened to delay its share giveaway if the five-year ring-fencing is removed. But Mr Davis told delegates: "The complaints by converting societies on this issue imply that they feel they need to rely on unfair, anti-competitive protection to survive as an independent organisation. We hope that Parliament will be firm in addressing this issue and not be swayed by veiled threats of delaying conversion windfall payments."

Chancellor's adviser talks down inflation

Sarah Ryle

THE BANK of England is too pessimistic about the outlook for inflation, according to a senior Treasury economist yesterday - suggesting that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, will resist pressure to raise interest rates when he meets the Bank governor, Eddie George, next week. Mr Clarke's economic forecasts came under scrutiny at the Commons Treasury Select Committee after three of his panel of independent advisers told MPs last week that base rates should be raised to 7 per

cent immediately in order to dampen inflationary pressures. The Bank's open desire to see interest rates raised to guarantee Mr Clarke's inflation target of 2.5 per cent is based on forecasts which differ from the Treasury model. The chief economic adviser to the Treasury, Alan Budd, told MPs on the committee that the Bank "and other outsiders" had repeatedly been too pessimistic about inflationary pressure. He said: "We are not seeing an unsustainable boom. Many mistakes have been made because people remain over-optimistic about the level of sus-

tainable growth." He added that the economy could grow at above trend for two years without threatening low, stable inflation. A surge in oil prices had fed through the system and boosted the official measure of inflation, he said. MPs also quizzed Treasury officials about the Government's missing billions of VAT receipts and told them to do their sums again. Mr Clarke blamed the \$6 billion shortfall in the official estimate of VAT revenue this year as the reason he has been forced to raise his original target for the public sector borrowing requirement.

But MPs said they feared that the new estimates of VAT receipts could also be shaved, Mr Budd estimated that \$2 billion was lost as a result of illegal tax avoidance, \$1 billion as a result of rigorous tax planning by firms "within the letter and the spirit of the law", and a further \$1 billion because of technical changes in the tax system. The chairman of the Commons committee, Matthew Crippin, demanded to know where the other \$3 billion had gone. He said: "I suggest you go back and look at the way the VAT receipts explanation is made."

Stripping the gilt

TODAY'S auction of £25 billion of gilts due in 2002 is widely expected to go well. Gilts look cheap compared to other major bonds, especially if the

Dyno-man prepares to do battle with Super-rat

KING Rat - the modern-day super-rodent - has a new enemy: the cheery chap from Dyno-Rod best known for clearing drains and changing locks, writes Dan Atkinson. As of yesterday, Dyno-craws are licensed to kill and will be armed with equipment a lot more lethal than a stink plunger. Among the treats awaiting Roland Rat and his ilk is what the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) describes as a "slow internal haemorrhage", lasting maybe three days, thanks to "anti-coagulant rodenticides". Wasps are dispatched with slow-acting pesticides, and cockroaches can be blasted three ways: by deadly dust, deadly bait or deadly spray. New entrant Dyno-Rod will also have other pest control businesses on its hit-list. "[The] pest control

industry currently offers commercial and domestic customers an indifferent standard of service at unjustifiably high prices - profit margins at 35 per cent are not uncommon," said marketing director Clive Smith. Number one extermination squad Rentokil, has perhaps half the business. There are two other big-ish names, National Britannia and a US group with a name designed to bring out the Schwarzenegger in every pest-controller: Terminix. Dyno-Rod expects to be nationwide in three years. Richard Strand, of the BPCA, said the market was hard to quantify because of the huge role of local authorities in exterminating domestic pests for little or no charge. The private sector turned over perhaps £200 million a year and in total Britain boasted 8,000 pest controllers. There is a lot more to pest control than rat-catching. Smaller pests include product-specific creepy-crawlies including grain weevil, the hide beetle (curse of banneries), but honey-bees enjoy the distinction of being just about the only thing pest controllers are not allowed to zap.

Table with columns for country and bank selling rates, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, USA, and UK.

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom of the page.

Rugby Union Pienaar says yes to Saracens

Robert Armstrong

FRANCOIS PIENAAR yesterday became the latest glittering prize from the southern hemisphere to be captured by an ambitious Courage League One club, Saracens, who snapped up Australia's Michael Lynagh earlier this year, have signed South Africa's World Cup-winning captain on a two-year contract thought to be worth £400,000. He will make his first appearance early in the new year.

Pienaar, who is widely regarded as the greatest rugby ambassador the Springboks have produced, will help Saracens broaden their popular appeal on and off the pitch. His dynamic style of play at blind-side flanker and his easy rapport with fans should give the London club value for money.

It is understood that Pienaar, who was controversially omitted from South Africa's current tour of France and Wales had been in contact with other English clubs, notably Leicester, through an agent. He is the first South African Test player to join a British club since the international boycott on the Springboks was lifted five years ago.

Pienaar, 30 next month, will form one of the most powerful back rows in the Courage

leagues alongside the England A regulars Tony Diproso and Richard Hill.

Yesterday he admitted he still wanted to add to his 29 caps. "I am determined to challenge for my place back in the South African national team and eventually go back home and put something back into South African rugby," he said, revealing that he had spoken to President Nelson Mandela before signing the Saracens deal. "I have phoned President Mandela and he is very sorry that I will be leaving South Africa. But I am going to represent South Africa in an ambassadorial role."

No one can deny that Nigel Wray, the City millionaire who has bankrolled Saracens, is serious about signing Test players; Lynagh (72 caps) helped Australia win the 1991 World Cup, and France's Philippe Sella (111 caps) was in the 1967 final. England's scrum-half Kyran Bracken and the Irish international Richard Wallace and Paddy Johns are also in the Saracens line-up.

David Campese will make his final representative appearance in Britain against the Barbarians at Twickenham on Saturday.

AUSTRALIA: M Burke, J Post, J Lint, T Moran (capt), D Campese, P Howard, R Payne, D Crowley, M Caplan, A Blaxland, D Gillin, T Gavin, D Maru or D Pienaar, M Brisk, D Wilson.



Coming soon... Francois Pienaar expects to make his debut for Saracens early next year. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID GIBSON

Tragedy draws Oxford undergrads closer together

Ian Mathis

OXFORD meet Cambridge at Twickenham next Tuesday afternoon with 14 Englishmen, six Australians, four Irishmen, two New Zealanders, two Welshmen, a South African and a Canadian on the field for this increasingly international event.

But the 15th University Match will be particularly remembered for an absent

Australian, Ian Tucker. The 23-year-old died of head injuries in October after a tragic incident against Saracens, the first fatality in the first-class game in the modern era.

Quentin de Bruyn, the South African who captained Oxford, would have played alongside Tucker in the centre. "Since Ian's death we're been playing without the No. 12 jersey and will continue to do so in honour of his next week," he said as he announced the side.

There will be a minute's silence before the match. Oxford are also planning to set up a bursary in Tucker's memory. Steve Hill, director of rugby, said: "Ian's death has drawn us closer together. It's been a difficult time for our players, especially those like Richard Ramley, the England Under-21 lock who wins his fourth Blue, leads Cambridge. They have been racked by injuries this autumn but have already defeated the touring Queensland side.

James Averis for the key fly-half role, have prepared some surprises for them.

"Cambridge do have a strong pack," Hill admitted, "but hopefully we can offer them one or two things they haven't expected."

Richard Ramley, the England Under-21 lock who wins his fourth Blue, leads Cambridge. They have been racked by injuries this autumn but have already defeated the touring Queensland side.

Catterick with form for the Jackpot races

12.50 Topswallow	1.50 Thunderbolt
12.50 Alpacorta (imp)	2.50 Pegasus
1.50 Superstar	3.50 Pegasus

Southwell

1.00 Lancers	2.00 Lancers
2.00 Lancers	3.00 Lancers
3.00 Lancers	4.00 Lancers

Fontwell

1.00 Lancers	2.00 Lancers
2.00 Lancers	3.00 Lancers
3.00 Lancers	4.00 Lancers

Results

NEWCASTLE	12.50 Topswallow	1.50 Thunderbolt
12.50 Alpacorta (imp)	2.50 Pegasus	3.50 Pegasus
1.50 Superstar	4.50 Pegasus	5.50 Pegasus

Southwell

1.00 Lancers	2.00 Lancers
2.00 Lancers	3.00 Lancers
3.00 Lancers	4.00 Lancers

Fontwell

1.00 Lancers	2.00 Lancers
2.00 Lancers	3.00 Lancers
3.00 Lancers	4.00 Lancers

Racing It won't be a funny thing at the BHB forum

Chris Hawkins

FIRST it was the Jockey Club now it is the British Horseracing Board. The name has changed, the format and personnel have changed but the sniping goes on as ever.

Has there ever been a racing authority that was not incompetent, lacking in imagination and dynamism or out of touch with the industry's needs?

Since the Chancellor cocked a snook at racing's request for help in last week's Budget all hell has been let loose with demands that heads must roll.

Top of the wanted list are Lord Wakeham, chairman of the BHB, and Tristan Ricketts, the chief executive.

And as luck would have it (good or bad depending on which side you are on) both men will be required to share centre stage at the BHB's Annual Forum on December 17.

The Inquisition takes place at the Royal Geographical Society in London before an invited audience of 150 representing all sections of racing.

By holding it elsewhere, say at the Royal Albert Hall, charging £50 for a ringside seat and selling the TV rights, racing could have gone a long way to solving its financial problems. Lack of imagination again, not nearly as abysmal marketing skills?

For, make no mistake, this will be a serious fight. As Wakeham and Ricketts look out their gaze will be returned on all sides by a flinty glare.

Ranged against them will be Peter Savill and Eric Parker for the malcontented Racecourse Owners' Association, while the main spokesman for the trainers will be Ian Balding and Peter Cundell.

Ranked against them will be the bookmakers, who are likely to come from representatives of the Racecourse Association, Levy Board, Jockey Club, Tote, BOA and the National Association of Bookmakers and all in all the opposition will be formidable. One of the possible solutions to the financial problems is the closure of some of the smaller tracks or at least the withdrawal of Levy support. This would be unpopular, but a cutback in the fixture list would not be as hard to take.

It is not only Britain which has hit difficult times. In Paris yesterday the track at Evry staged its final meeting, sacrificed because of a cash crisis in French racing.

The big race was the Prix Edouard, rather insensitively, it was won by the British in the shape of Wilcomas, trained by Peter Harkin and ridden by John Reid.

The Jockey Club's proposed inquiry into the jockeys' "strike" at Haydock in October, originally scheduled for the BHB, and Tristan Ricketts, the chief executive. It will have to be postponed.

Although Frankie Detlor has made it clear he is prepared to travel back from abroad many other riders including Pat Eddery will be out of the country.

At Portman Square today there will be a seminar about the effects of diabetes and whether jockeys suffering from it should be granted a licence.

The issue came to a head when Jonathan Lower, the jump jockey, was advised not to reapply for a licence when found to be suffering from diabetes.

The Licensing Committee will listen in private to the views of assembled experts and could reverse its ruling, although no decision is likely today.

This afternoon's three meetings, the minimum as requested by the bookmakers to keep the Levy coming in, have produced decent fields, helped by some rain.

Alwarqa (12.50) is the day's star in the second division of the Eborian Juvenile Novices Hurdle at Catterick after just falling to land a gamble which seconded to The Great Flood on the course and distance 11 days ago.

At Southwell, Julie Cecil, who does well with a small string of jumpers, is not asking too severe a question of Isalah (2.00) in a class D handicap.

Soccer

£10m windfall for Manchester City

Ian Ross

MANCHESTER City, who could hit bottom of the First Division table this weekend, have received the unexpected boost of £10 million to help them buy their way out of their worst crisis in more than a century.

Half of that sum ironically comes from Stephen Boler, the multi-millionaire businessman who was an ally of the late Peter Swales, ousted as chairman by Francis Lee in an acrimonious power struggle almost three years ago.

Boler has plunged into City shares in a big enough way to make him the club's majority shareholder, but last night he insisted that he had no wish to become chairman or any kind of public figurehead for the club.

"Basically all I am is a fan who wants to use his money to help," he said. "Take my word for it, with this money in place and available to improve the playing squad, you will see a dramatic improve-

ment very quickly in the fortunes of Manchester City.

Francis Lee has my total support. Whatever people might say to the contrary, I can tell you that he has put a great deal of his personal money into Manchester City; we are talking in millions.

The club has wonderful support and I can promise those fans that the vast majority of the cash will be used to bring quality players to Maine Road.

Through share redistribution and the purchase of some of City's loan stock, Boler is estimated to have increased his shareholding from 13 per cent to 33 per cent in the past 72 hours. Lee holds 29.9 per cent and Swales's widow Brenda still has 10 per cent.

City's other generous benefactor is believed to be another concerned lifelong supporter, John Wardle, one of the men behind the JD sports-wear company.

At their annual general meeting tomorrow City shareholders are expected to be told that Wardle, like Boler, has agreed to hand over £5 million with no strings at-

tached, for the time being at least.

About £2 million of City's windfall is likely to find its way straight to the club's bankers to reduce an overdraft estimated at £15 million, so it is unlikely that the caretaker manager Phil Neal will be sent on a pre-Christmas shopping spree.

Lee is more likely to use this windfall to tempt the former Leeds United manager Howard Wilkinson. City made an informal approach to Wilkinson 10 days ago but he declined the offer of employment for lack of assurances about the club's financial status.

Neal is expected to be at the helm for the visit of Bradford City on Saturday, but that afternoon may be his last in the job.

He seemed almost resigned to his fate after Sunday's comprehensive defeat by Wolverhampton Wanderers, insisting that City were a club in turmoil long before he arrived in early October as assistant to Steve Coppell, who resigned on November 8 after only 33 days in charge.



Not just a City boy... Boler has a Kalahari game sanctuary and a yen to lift the Blues

many. He sold his stake for several million pounds in 1976 and proceeded to make another fortune in the furniture business, setting up his Kitchens Direct operation — so called because it sold kitchens through direct responses to newspaper advertisements — in 1982.

By 1991 Boler snapped up Delphinus Bedrooms and Sharps Bedrooms, which went to make up Limelight together with Molen, another fitted-kitchens business, and Portland, a conservatories and windows firm bought in 1986. His current stake in the company is worth £17 million.

Much of his time recently has gone on his game reserve. It is called Twala, which translates as "a new beginning" — something City have long sought. However, there are limits to Boler's philanthropy and he is determined that Twala will one day recoup the money he has invested in it. "I feel I have a moral responsibility to save the black rhino but, if the species is to be protected in

perpetuity, there has to be a commercial element to it," he says. "I have to find a way of making this pay in 50 years' time. I don't want to write a cheque for £14 million and have to keep topping it up each year."

In Africa he offsets the money invested in conservation by devoting one third of his land to hunting, encouraging tourists to sport. "Why deny that we are involved?" he says. "Hunting is exciting, it's a vital commercial role."

For a man who has completely transformed a part of the African landscape, revitalising Manchester City may not prove too daunting.

Why Boler the hunter can afford a white elephant

Ian King and Neil Robinson on Maine Road's conservation-minded sugar-daddy

STEPHEN BOLER's financial firepower puts him comfortably alongside football's leading sugar-daddies. His total wealth is conservatively put at £120 million, ahead of names such as the Everton chairman Peter Johnson, the Middlesbrough chairman Steve Gibson and Rangers' owner David Murray.

he runs a sanctuary for black rhino. Of course there have been rumours of major investment in City before, with everyone from the Chester chairman Mark Gutterman to the Gallagher brothers from Oasis about to spring a takeover. But, in Boler, City have a man with copper-bottomed financial credentials capable of doing for Maine Road what the late Matthew Harding did for Chelsea.

The parallels are clear. Just as Harding, who was Britain's 89th-richest man, traded on his image as archetypal Chelsea supporter, Boler yesterday described himself as "basically a fan who wants to help Manchester City". Whereas Harding made his fortune in insurance, Boler began his business career by helping found Kwik-Fit, the car-parts com-

Rovers renew Eriksson chase

Ian Ross

BLACKBURN ROVERS hope to announce Sven Goran Eriksson as their manager before Christmas. Only a week after the Swede said he had no intention of resigning as Sampdoria coach to move to Wood Park, he has reopened negotiations with Blackburn — indeed, he is rumoured to have visited England this week to discuss personal terms with the Blackburn chairman Robert Carr.

Eriksson is in the last few months of a six-year contract with the Italian club, which he is not seeking to renew. Arsenal have sent the FA a video of Saturday's 2-1 victory over Newcastle and confirmed that they want the referee Graham Barber to send off their captain Tony Adams after his challenge on Alan Shearer.

Premiership: Middlesbrough 0, Leicester City 2 Samba silent as Boro slip up again

George Caulkin
THE BRITISH BEACH to which Bryan Robson threatens to banish the errant Emerson for the rest of his playing days must have looked mighty inviting to his shell-shocked Middlesbrough team last night.

Buffeted by wind, rain and a brace of Leicester goals against the run of play, their wait for a Premiership victory now stretches almost to three months. Summer's optimism is but a hazy memory.

For the first time in a long time, Robson fielded a team without a South American in its ranks. With Emerson swol, Branco long departed and Juninho injured there was an inevitable air of

absent friends hanging over proceedings. Half a dozen first-team stalwarts were also unavailable and it was left to a largely home-grown bunch to provide the magic and muscle capable of arresting a winless league run of nine games.

Team talk

Table with 4 columns: Team, Goals, Points, etc. Includes teams like Aston Villa, Birmingham, Blackburn, Bolton, Bradford, Burnley, Chelsea, Coventry City, Derby County, Everton, Huddersfield, Ipswich, Leeds, Liverpool, Luton, Manchester City, Manchester United, Middlesbrough, Norwich, Nottingham Forest, Oldham, Oxford, Peterborough, Reading, Sheffield Wednesday, Southampton, Stoke, Sunderland, Tottenham, West Ham, Wimbledon, Wolves, Yeovil, York.

Results

Table with 2 columns: Division, Results. Includes Premier Division, Second Division, Third Division, and various football matches with scores.

Cricket

Table with 2 columns: Match, Results. Includes Test matches, One Day Internationals, and various cricket fixtures.

Rugby Union

Table with 2 columns: Match, Results. Includes various rugby union fixtures and scores.

Fixtures

Table with 2 columns: Match, Date. Lists upcoming fixtures for various sports including soccer, rugby, and basketball.

Champions League, Group C Rapid Vienna v Manchester United

United riding Ryan express to beat Rapid

David Lacey in Vienna

MANCHESTER United will put their faith in Ryan Giggs in the Ernst Happel Stadium here tonight while hoping that their trust in Juventus is not misplaced. The stronger the small of roost turkey from Turin, the greater United's chances of reaching the knockout stage of the European Cup will be.

As indeed did the United team as a whole. As Ferguson recalled: "We played really patiently, in the first half we were in no hurry, and then in the second we showed the speed to get forward."

"There's an element of cat and mouse in these games. You want to see what the other team can do, you don't want to do anything silly yourselves, you want to get your passing right, get a feel of the game and get confidence on the ball. This can help us in the latter stages of a match."

United need to reproduce a mixture of the controlled aggression that brought them success in Istanbul and the passion that nearly saved them against Juventus in the second half. In these games Ferguson seemed to be in a ghum mood when United arrived here yesterday. "I can't think about the other game," he insisted. "I'm focusing on what we're doing, inevitably we'll get to know what's happening in Turin but I don't want to hear it."

Rapid can hardly be as poor as they were in losing 2-0 at Old Trafford. Ivanov, the Bulgarian sweeper, can be expected to get at least one decent free-kick on target. They have a defender, Lesiak, suspended but otherwise will field much the same side.

Rapid Vienna (probable): Konecny; Vranov, Jozic, Schuster, Frosch, L. Zinger, R. Zinger, Kuhnauer, Wagner, Bogner. Manchester United (probable): Schmeichel; G. Neville, May, Palister, Irwin, Beckham, Butt, Keane, Giggs, Cantona. L. Sornell (Swi).

Group A: Auxerre v Rangers

Rangers and nervousness bar French path to glory

Patrick Glenn in Auxerre

THE normal combativeness of the Champions League may be hard to find at the Abbé Deschamps Stadium tonight, when a French team who do not have to win enter Scottish opponents indifferent about the result.

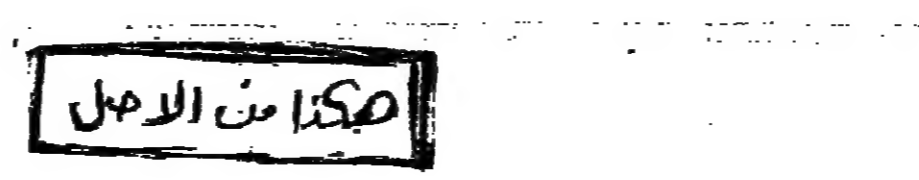
It is a prospect causing anxiety in the league, the 58-year-old coach who has moulded Auxerre into improbable champions of France after 58 years.

Roux's team need only a draw with Rangers to reach the last eight of the European Cup. Even if Ajax also draw in Switzerland against Grasshopper Zurich, Auxerre will qualify by virtue of their superior goal-power in beating Ajax 2-1 last month after leading to the Dutch champions 1-0 in September.

Auxerre's own edginess may be a bigger problem than Rangers. Roux was understandably guarded yesterday when discussing the possibilities. "We know a draw is enough," he said, "but it makes us unsure of how to ap-

Sport in brief

Swimming: Dawn Fraser, 58, the Australian who won the 100m freestyle in three successive Olympics, was "stable and satisfactory" yesterday after a suspected heart attack. Motor Racing: Ligier have signed the Japanese driver Shinji Nakano, 25, for the 1997 Formula One season to partner Olivier Panis. Cricket: Nottinghamshire have appointed Derbyshire's Steve Binks as head groundsman after Frank Dalling's decision to step down after one year. Snooker: Geoff Foulds, previously vice-chairman, was yesterday appointed WPBSA chairman in succession to John Spencer, who resigned last month. Athletics: The BAF is expected to agree at Sunday's AGM to turn athletes instead of the current one serving on its council, writes Duncan Mackay. Rugby League: Karl Fairbank, 33, has retired after more than 300 games for Bradford. He won 16 GB caps.





Cashing in... Henman on his way to victory

Tennis

Stephen Bierley in Munich sees the British No. 1 earn more than he did in all 1995 by beating Michael Stich in the Grand Slam Cup

Henman strikes it rich and quick

THE pavements here, or the floor of the Olympiastadion, are truly paved with gold. Barely 24 hours after stepping off a plane from London...

On the face of it a tournament which pays out total prize-money of \$8 million ought to be too attractive for anyone to miss.

Next week Krawinkel enters hospital for a knee operation. Here, thanks to the \$250,000 bonus paid to winners of the Australian Open, Roland Garros, Wimbledon or Flushing Meadows, he picked up \$350,000 for 46 minutes of court time.

The British No. 1, who had not played since winning his home title at Telford last month, practised for 90 minutes with Jim Courier on Monday and was understandably delighted that he had hit the ball so well yesterday.

Stich, when he loses, is given to blaming everybody and everything other than himself. On this occasion there were no real excuses although obviously the two are intertwined.

There were few signs of the German lifting his game there after apart from a couple of mighty forehands. So, when Henman broke him again midway through the second set, the result was inevitable.

CRICKET

Tour matches: Mashonaland v England XI

England brought low by the vicar's son from Sussex

David Hoppe in Harare

AMONG the many innovations that David Lloyd has introduced into English cricket is the dressing-room maxims, Churchill speeches and fitness camps, to mention but three.

Atherton and Hussain in his first three overs, and again to 94 for seven before Robert Croft's unbeaten 66 displayed overdue resourcefulness.

After Thorpe had refused a third, left the top four with 11 runs between them, and the loss of Crawley, after Croft had shunned a tight single into the off side, added to the sense of waste.

England's latest setback came at the hands of James Kirtley, son of a Sussex vicar, and the fact that he was from their own parish did not make the experience any more palatable.

In Kirtley's most optimistic moments he imagined that his proximity to England might be worth a spot of net bowling, a learning session in the bar, and the chance to relax in the sun and watch some Test cricket.

A lunch-time storm interrupted play for more than 2½ hours, and the longer Croft is allowed to dwell upon a predicament the deeper he digs his heels in. Not for the first time in his short England career such cussedness served his side well.

England had reasonably hoped for a one-day match against a President's XI on the same ground on Sunday, but with only two four-day matches before the first Test they can no longer take refuge in that excuse.

The Kookaburra ball swung for the first hour on a humid morning and both Stewart, against the left-arm Brian Strang, and Hussain dragged balls on their stumps when they were seeking to play no shot.

He was dropped at extra cover when Kirtley, instead took him to his half-century — but he rounded off matters with England's only flourish, striking 14 off four balls from Brian Strang, including a straight six, before he marched from the field at the first inkling of bad light.



Harare horror... Alec Stewart plays on to his stumps after scoring a solitary single

Australia v West Indies: second Test

Ninety per cent Warne plenty good enough

Mike Selby in Sydney

DURING lunch at the SCG the electronic scoreboard ran an advertisement of Shane Warne, Nike star-stud gleaming, sending down a sizzler that turned into a buzz-saw and cut through bat, stumps, the lot.

That split second took the fight out of West Indies. After an interval of contemplation, the emphasis shifted from trying to win to trying not to lose and Hooper who had played so beautifully when Chanderpaul was there, went into his shell.

Not 10 minutes previously, Warne had produced such a slip-sporting rabbit from the hat that West Indies, at that point well placed not just to save this Test but even to win it, simply curled up and died to go 2-0 down in the series.

The rest departed almost before the picket gate had stopped swinging. Adams to the excellent Man of the Match Glen, Ball on to his back and flicked up the rebound with his foot.

Chasing 346, and 27 without loss overnight, West Indies had lost three wickets, including Brian Lara's, to be 35 for three before the froth was off the members' cappuccino.

Much, of course, had been expected of Lara. But he has been overcast by McGrath in the series and remained so yesterday, although there was a touch of controversy about his dismissal. He pulled away disdainfully from McGrath's spinners but bounced but left his bat in the air. The ball clipped the bat. Heavily dived forward and scooped it up and David Shepherd, after consultation with Darrell Hair at square leg, gave him out.

Except, that is, for the pair who came between those two collapses. Chanderpaul and Carl Hooper, who in 23 sublime overs together added 117 for the fourth wicket and made batting look ridiculously easy for the only time in this match, even temporarily seeing Warne off.

At times West Indies looked a sad shambles. "We are not looking (like) a professional unit... probably a lack of concentration or lack of commitment or a combination of both," Walsh said. "All the guys are trying but it's just not happening."

Australian Capital Territory v England A

Slow pitch finally frustrates Holloake

Andy Wilson in Canberra

ENGLAND A ended the least instructive and most frustrating section of their tour to date with a disappointing draw, because of a slow pitch which disguised the limitations of the home team.

from four balls before pulling the first ball of the second over to midwicket with the score on 12. Craig White came in next but went in similar fashion two overs later.

leaving them on 94 for five, and Michael Vaughan responded to his demotion to No. 6 with three fours which left 24 more runs needed off the last two overs.

Lawrence 'fitter than ever' and hoping to return

THE former England fast bowler David Lawrence is hoping to make a surprise comeback, two years after giving up all hope of recovering from splitting his kneecap so dramatically in a Test in New Zealand in February 1992.

serious: it is something I have got to do for myself." The Sussex chairman Alan Caffry has hit back at criticism of the county's abrupt dismissal of Ed Giddins only two days after the TCCB banned the fast bowler for 19 months over a cocaine-positive test.

was good reason. The 'drug' incident was just one factor and not the sole reason, as the press would have you believe. I am not, however, prepared to go into details.

Motor Racing

Mansell considers comeback with Jordan

Man Henry

NICHEL MANSSELL has responded to an approach from Jordan-Peugeot and will round the team's headquarters at Silverstone this morning.

The official entry list for next season's world championship was published on Monday and it showed the second Jordan-Peugeot seat to be filled in the 24-car field.

In 1995 — would go a long way towards easing Eddie Jordan's disappointment at failing to secure Damon Hill's services for 1997.

Squash

Harris shocked by Gregory's gall

Richard Jago in Bombay

PAUL GREGORY recovered from within three points of defeat and overcame some quirky refereeing yesterday to usurp the seedings and earn a quarter-final with the favourite, Rodney Eyles.

12-15, 15-13, 15-8 win in the \$65,000 Mahindra International after almost an hour and a half will have guaranteed him one of his biggest pay-days.

Advertisement for DuckCity by Alan Shaw. It features a cartoon illustration of a man in a wheelchair using a computer. Text includes: 'I like to use A.T.D.', 'All Terrain Duck - a positive contribution to child preoccupation', 'PC/MAC CD-ROM/R/RP £14.99/OUT NOW', 'visit me at www.duckcity.com', and the BMG Interactive logo.

Handwritten signature or scribble at the bottom of the page.

Saracens capture Springbok star, page 13
Manchester City's £10m windfall, page 14

Henman storms to megabuck victory, page 15
England embarrassed by Mashonaland, page 15

SportsGuardian

SOCCER

Uefa Cup, third round, second leg: Newcastle United 2, FC Metz 0 (agg: 3-1)

Asprilla's perfect double

Michael Walker

JUST as Newcastle United were contemplating their first goalless draw for nearly 2½ years, Faustino Asprilla, the man who cannot score in domestic football but revels on the European nights, snatched two late goals at St James' Park.

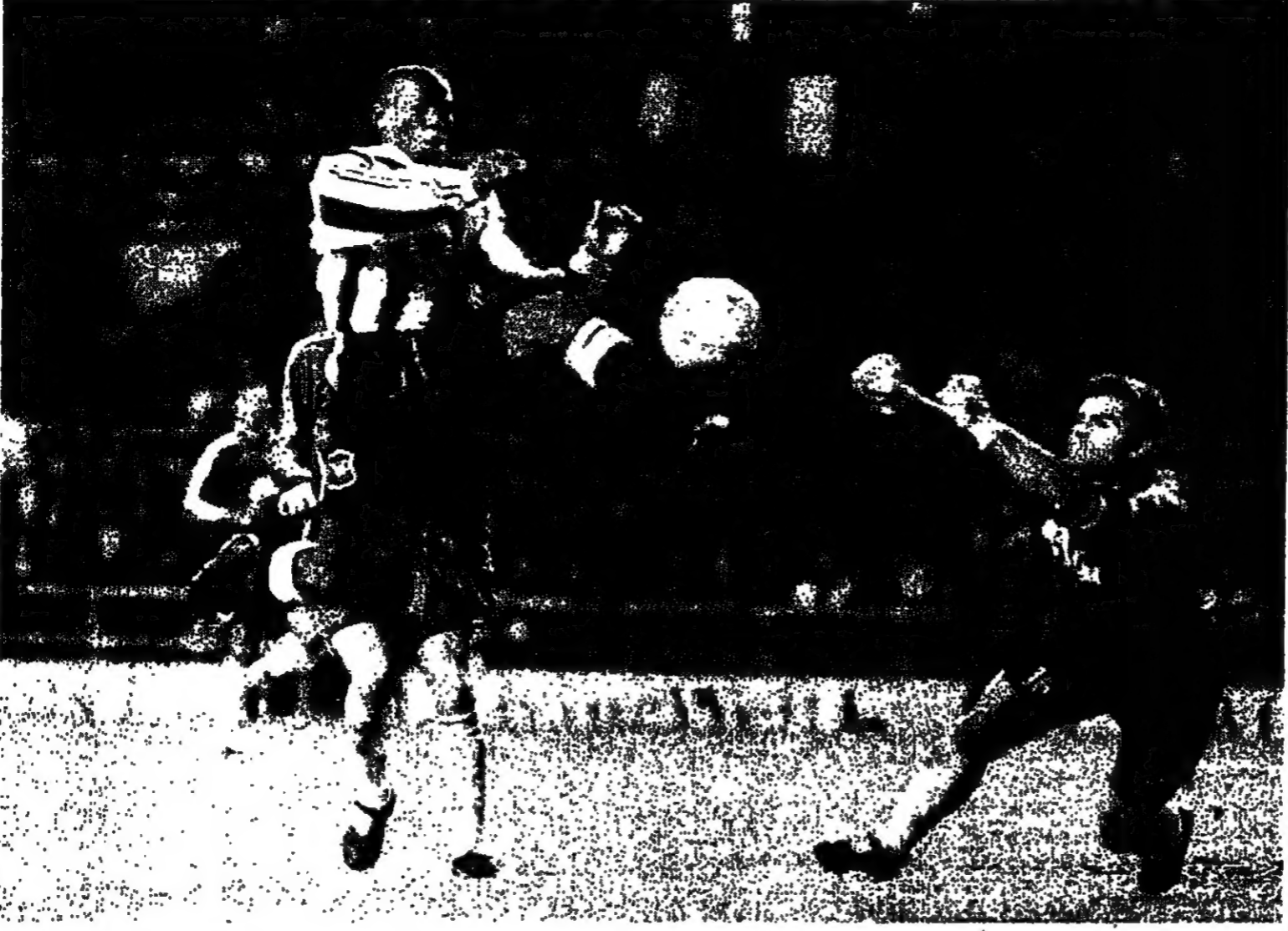
A stooping 81st-minute header was followed 60 seconds later by a flick over the advancing Metz goalkeeper and, though both goals were against the run of play, they guarantee Newcastle a place in the quarter-final draw on Friday week.

It is never straightforward with Asprilla, though, and, having been booked for excessive celebration after his opener, the Colombian will be suspended for whomsoever Newcastle meet then.

It had been a long time coming for Newcastle but, when Peacock chested down Gillespie's centre and knocked the ball back across goal, Asprilla nodded home from four yards. His second, a nonchalant flick after a daring run, sealed the result but the scorillonie flattered Newcastle. Their performance was as unconvincing as any of late.

A calendar month and five games had passed without Newcastle experiencing victory but Keegan persisted with his now familiar line-up. In fact it was Metz who made changes, with Isias, the man who felled Batty, as expected on the bench. Metz also had a different keeper from the first leg, Biancarelli, a 26-year-old Corsican who had played only 10 times for the club.

In a nervous opening from the home side it was almost a quarter of an hour before Biancarelli had to make a serious intervention. For the first 10 minutes the men in rouge, just as Ferencvaros had been in the previous round, were the livelier.



One that got away... Asprilla looks impressive in the face of Metz's goalkeeper Biancarelli but this chance came to nothing

Elliott was twice exposed early on, by the speed of Pires, then Traore; and, once, Blanchard had shown clean soles to Beardsley, the Frenchman was able to run 60 yards unchallenged before bringing a back-peddling tip-

over save out of Srnicek. It was not the kind of attacking to cause panic, though neither were Newcastle offering more than glimpses of danger themselves. A curling Gillespie centre just eluded the dive of

Shearer and a driven Gillespie shot was hacked off the line by Kestendeuch. Speculative shots from Lee and Givola followed but the visitors' swift, incisive break-aways continued to carry the greater promise of a goal. In

the 36th minute one should have arrived. Once again Pires found space behind Elliott and, when his cross swept in from the byline, Albert missed his kick; the ball bounced perfectly towards Lang but he put his header over from six yards.

A stinging 30-yard thunderbolt from Pires was then parried over by Srnicek, who wisely did not try to catch it.

At least the half was to end on a comparatively bright note for Newcastle with a typically hungry smash-and-grab tackle and blast from Shearer. And, when Asprilla sped by Terrier after the interval, it seemed the Colombian had caught the mood.

However, any optimism caused by that little flurry of activity dissolved abruptly. In the next minute Lee's slick pass from outside his own area went directly to Pires, who in a flash had exchanged one-two with Traore and was bearing down on Srnicek. Having apparently steadied

Hillsborough, the essential TV drama



Jim White

IT WON'T be easy, the scenes of anguish are relentless, but every football fan should watch Hillsborough, Jimmy McGovern's television examination of the worst tragedy in British sporting history which is screened tomorrow night. If only to realise, were it not for the intervention of chance, it could have been you.

The events covered by the film are, according to the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire, too recent to be a fit subject for dramatic examination. When his force was approached for help early in the work's research, he protested that such a project might upset the families of the victims. Which, it might be thought, was a bit of a first in South Yorkshire police's attitude to the disaster: worrying about the families' sensibilities rather than their own backs.

In fact, the film came about only because the Hillsborough Families' Support Group approached McGovern specifically to write up their story. They met after a special screening of an episode of the writer's Cracker, the one about Albie, the skinhead driven to serial murder by what he saw at Hillsborough. "I was worried that some of them might be upset by a fictional depiction of their trauma in Cracker," McGovern says. "So we arranged for them to see it. Afterwards a couple of them said they actually identified with Albie's rage. I have never seen so much anger in people's eyes."

The families agreed with McGovern that, far from being too early, it was about time their side of things was given an airing. "It is about time because it's the truth," he says. "I wanted as well to be fair to the ordinary copper on the ground who was let down by lack of leadership on the day. Some might feel, on seeing it, I was being a bit too kind. But I was desperate not to let the South Yorkshire forces have the excuse that I was just being anti-police in order to dismiss the film."

Drama-documentary is a contentious genre, one which has been compromised by saved offerings such as In The Name Of The Father. As it

spins its tale of blunder, stupidity and confusion, however, Hillsborough seems all too plausible.

"The police were so bloody incompetent there was no need for us to exaggerate for dramatic effect," says McGovern. "The basic facts are enough. If anything we toned it down, because nobody would believe some of the things that went on."

The families' preoccupations in the seven years since the disaster have been twofold: to ensure such a thing could never happen again, and to seek justice.

In the first they have manifestly succeeded. The events of the film happened within the lifetime of an infant-school child but it seems like another world. Anyone who went to matches back then will remember the crushes depicted in it: the shoves, the fences, the rickety terraces, the overcrowding. Also, whenever something went wrong, the attitude of those in control that, since you are a football fan and thus solely in attendance to cause trouble, you must be to blame.

It really is not like that any more, and it is only when you go to an antediluvian stadium such as Oxford United's condemned Manor Ground, with its funnel-like exits and hopeless access, that you appreciate how much things have changed. That it took a disaster of the scale of Hillsborough to facilitate change is the real tragedy within McGovern's film.

The families' quest for justice is a different matter. The catalogue of clumsy error McGovern discovered in his researches — the way video surveillance evidence was ignored, the fact that vital tapes went missing, the manner in which crucial witnesses were not called to the witness box — suggests that the jury at the Hillsborough disaster inquest may not have been in full possession of the facts when it delivered a verdict of accidental death.

SADLY, you feel that the interests involved are too strong to allow a single television programme the clout to reopen the case. But McGovern felt obliged to try. "I think it is clear from the film that we reckon was to blame for the disaster," he says. "We know what happened. If anyone thinks any of it is untruthful, then let them sue me."

And you get the feeling, from his tone of voice, that he would rather enjoy that. Hillsborough will be shown on ITV tomorrow at 10pm with the concluding part at 10.45pm.

GOLD

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Set by Janus

"It's a very personal story that I'd like to see performed, for River's sake if nothing else. And I know this sounds funny, but it's a good script."
Performing River Phoenix's last film

G2 Arts page 8

Across

- Vile wretch perpetrating crimes on worker (5)
- Withdrawn by a retreating donkey (5)
- Is it the usual custom among doctors? (7,8)
- Spoken end piece to story (4)
- North African attraction rejected by naval officers (8)
- God in Oriental grave (3)
- Settles on last plot in headland (5)
- Public green with nothing on it (5)
- The height of exaltation (9)
- Arose from Egyptian leader flouting mandate (8)
- Flower-party backing queen (4)
- Unforgettable ghostly air? (8,7)

Down

- Belonging to those people of South Eire (5)
- Obstacle for a rustic crane-operator (9)
- Child said to have power (5)
- Unique model garment (7)
- In another area it might be uncommon (4)
- Confederate of General Lysander (4)
- Over there, Dante is doomed (10)
- Mishap a novice made a note of? (10)
- Threatening to find one in moonshot by America (7)
- Odd forenames for a fraternity member (8)
- Professional right about Theopian's muscle (10)
- A golfer's watering hole (10)

14 Notes revised before talk on bird (9)

17 Deletion certain after a number of years (7)

19 Pulled in by hotel with internal attraction (7)

22 Move around kitchen appliance (5)

23 Architectural flier (4)

24 Airmen taking one up and away (4)

Solution tomorrow

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